

SAINT PAULS.

AUGUST, 1868.

THE SACRISTAN'S HOUSEHOLD.

A STORY OF LIPPE-DETMOLD.

CHAPTER IV.

A METROPOLIS IN MINIATURE.

DETMOLD, the capital of the principality of Lippe-Detmold, is one of the pleasantest, prettiest, and most agreeably situated of the smaller Residenzen of Germany. The castle, or princely palace, is a fine old building, situated in the midst of well-arranged gardens, and around these the little town spreads itself in all directions. The streets are wide and clean and quiet. Beside the river Wern, which runs through Detmold, and is here banked in so as to form a canal, there are pleasant paths and picturesque houses, draped with the rich Virginia creeper, sombre ivy, or delicate woodbine. Further there are delicious woodland walks branching out hither and thither through the great forest which clothes the Grotenberg, upon whose lofty summit the colossal Hermann's statue is one day to stand.

But not of these romantic shades or river margins was Herr Friedrich Peters thinking when the old Schimmel paused soberly before the door of the chief inn in Detmold, and then allowed the hostler to lead him with much deliberation into the stable-yard. Herr Peters had his share of the German love for nature and appreciation of natural beauty; but it was the metropolitan aspect of Detmold which most attracted him. In his eyes the wide, clean streets, the well-dressed ladies who demurely paced them, the shops with windows filled with large squares of clear glass, revealing garments and stuffs of last year's fashion, were absolutely magnificent. He could have almost envied the chemist from whom he intended to buy a modest supply of drugs, when he contemplated the crimson, and blue, and yellow bottles in his shop-window, the little semicircular counter topped with marble, and the half-dozen coloured

scent-bottles arranged symmetrically within a glass case. It was very grand certainly, and very different from the dark little shop at Horn.

Peters made his purchases, and ordered them to be sent to the inn, and then he walked down the principal street, glancing at the inscriptions over the shop-doors, until he paused before a stationer's window and looked in with a hesitating air. There were two persons in the shop, an old man and a young one. The old man was making entries in a ledger or account-book; the young man was piling reams of coarse packing-paper on to a high shelf. He had taken his coat off, the better to perform his work, and his shirt-collar was turned down, showing a round, muscular throat. His movements were quick and dexterous, and he lifted and placed the heavy packets of paper with the ease of one whose strength was but slightly tasked. Peters stood staring in at the window until the old man, lifting his head, observed him, and then the apothecary walked away slowly. Presently he returned on the opposite side of the street, and this time, on looking in, he perceived that the stationer's shop was tenanted but by one person. The old man had disappeared. The younger one was still working, but had nearly filled the high shelf. Peters crossed the road briskly and went in. "Good day, Otto," said he. At the sound of the high, thin voice, the young fellow turned round sharply, almost letting fall the packet he held in his hands, and uttered a joyful exclamation. A brighter, franker face than he turned on the apothecary it would not be easy to find. Otto Hemmerich is a great favourite of mine, and I desire to make my reader also feel kindly towards him. Sure I am that if the portrait be not a pleasant one the fault will be wholly the painter's.

A well-balanced, somewhat square head, broadly developed in the regions of conscientiousness and firmness; thick, curling, brown hair, that lay in close rings on his forehead; bright keen blue eyes, which might have been almost fierce but for the merry, laughing spirit that danced in them; well-shaped, though not strictly regular, features; strong, white, wholesome teeth; a skin tanned to a dusky red by sun and weather; a powerful, well-knit figure, rather beneath the middle height; and in his voice and in his gestures, in all he said and all he did, a sense of youth, and health, and vigour, an atmosphere of clearness and honesty, which refreshed one's moral nature much as fresh air refreshes one's body.

"My good Herr Peters!" he exclaimed in a loud, ringing tone. It seemed impossible to imagine Otto ever whispering, or even talking low.

"Hem!" cried the apothecary with an elaborate cough. "Don't shout so, Otto. I'm not sure that my visit would be quite agreeable to your master."

In Detmold it is still possible to speak to a man about his "master" without offending him.

"What, Herr Schmitt? Well, but you didn't come to see him!"

"No, my boy, I came to see you. But,—the fact is, I,—to say the truth, your uncle does not know of my coming, and I am not certain that he would approve."

"Oh, because he will think you ought to have told him first, so that he might have sent a message, eh?"

"Ahem!" cried the apothecary again.

"Oh, well, Herr Peters, that can't be helped now. Here you are, and I am right glad to see you."

"And how do you get on here, Otto? A fortnight is but a short time to judge of your new life. But do you seem to,—to think you shall,—like it?"

Peters put his head on one side, and looked at Otto insinuatingly, as though to persuade him that he ought to like it very much indeed. It was the kind of manner which the apothecary assumed in administering a peculiarly nauseous potion to a sick child.

"Not a bit of it, my good friend," replied Otto in his fullest chest voice. "I don't like it at all. And, what is worse, I'm afraid I never shall like it. But I knew all that beforehand. I am not such a boy but what I know that it will be my duty to do a good many things that don't just please my fancy. I shall stick to it for the three years my uncle has bound me for, and then——"

"And then?"

"And then we shall see. Lord, we may be all dead and buried in three years! It's an awful long time to look forward to. But now tell me the news of the good people at Horn. How's my uncle, first and foremost?"

"The Herr Küster is wonderful for a man of his years. I saw him last night at the Pied Lamb. He was full of conversation, and very,—very pleasant. He is a man of great experience and wisdom, is your uncle Schnarcher."

It may be observed, for the credit of Peters' sincerity, that he really believed what he said.

"And old Quendel? Is he growing any thinner? Ha, ha, ha! And the Steinbergs? And Granny Becker? And big Hans? And the blacksmith's poodle? And your own Schimmel? Tell me all about everybody,—dumb beasts and all!"

"They're all well, as far as I know, Otto. But there is an old friend of yours whom you haven't asked for. And he was talking about you last night, too."

"Is there? An old friend whom I haven't asked for!"

"Farmer Lehmann! I thought he was your prime friend and favourite, Otto. You used to be always at the farm before you went to Halle."

The last packet of paper, which Otto at this moment placed on the

shelf, must have been peculiarly heavy, for the effort of lifting it seemed to bring the blood into his face, as he answered, "Ah, dear Farmer Franz! Was he talking about me, Herr Peters?"

"Yes. But, Otto, what dreadful weights you are lifting! Don't overtax your strength, my boy."

Otto burst out laughing. "My good Herr Peters," he said, "only see, I can lift these packets with one hand! Honestly, this is the part of my work I like best. I like to feel that I am using my muscles, and doing something for my daily bread. Head-work I'm a dunce at, and I'm afraid Herr Schmitt has got but a bad bargain."

"Yes, Lehmann was talking of you and of your poor father of blessed memory. I called at the farm this morning, and saw the Haus-frau. She's a bitter weed. Ach du lieber Himmel! And I got a parcel to bring to Detmold for Liese."

"For Liese! Is Liese in Detmold?"

"To be sure she is. Didn't you know it?"

"Not a word of it!" cried Otto hotly. "I went twice or thrice to the farm after I came back from Halle, but I never saw Lieschen, and Frau Lehmann gave me to understand that she was purposely keeping out of my way."

"O Lord," muttered Peters under his breath, "what a woman she is!" Then he added more loudly, "I never heard there was any secret in Liese's being in Detmold in service. She went off almost on a sudden. I don't think things were going quite comfortably at the farm. Poor little Lieschen! She's a kitten that hasn't yet grown to be a cat, as they all do sooner or later."

Otto stood quite still leaning on the counter, with a thoughtful, frowning face.

"Well, good-bye, lad," said Peters, holding out his hand. "Time is going, and the days are short now, and I have to dine and settle my score at the Blue Pigeon before I can turn the Schimmel's nose homewards. Besides, this errand for the Lehmanns will take up half an hour or so."

"Good-bye, good friend. I'm thankful to you for coming. Give my dutiful greetings to my uncle, pray, and messages to any one who may care to hear of me at Horn."

"Shall I greet Lieschen for you?"

"No, thank you. Liese Lehmann wants to hear nothing about me."

Otto wrung his old friend's hand hard, and stood for a few minutes watching the apothecary's tall, lank figure disappear down the street. Then he returned to the shop, and having resumed his coat, sat down to label and number, from a printed list which lay beside him, a series of photographic views which were presently to adorn the window. But, as Otto had himself confessed, head-work was not his forte, and he was unusually absent and preoccupied to-day. Under his fingers many beauties of the Rhine scenery were unjustly attributed to the

Moselle, and some views in the Harz country got labelled "Black Forest."

Peters meanwhile made his way to the house wherein Elizabeth, or, as she was always called, Liese Lehmann was filling the post of servant in the family of the Herr Justizrath von Schleppers. It was a pleasant house to look at,—built of dark-red brick, partly covered with ivy, and with its long, low façade fronting the river. Every window pane glistened crystal clear in the sunshine. The door-handle and knocker of polished brass were dazzling in their spotless cleanliness, and the white dimity curtains that shaded the parlour windows seemed to have come that instant from the hands of the laundress. But the house had an odd look of not being really used and inhabited. All its colours were as vivid and staring as those of a doll's house: the bricks very red, the door very green, the window-sashes and frames a bright yellow. Only the deep hue of the old ivy somewhat softened and harmonised the general effect. Peters's hand was raised to the knocker, when the door opened and a portly matron came forth, who looked at him with an expression of countenance which was, to say the least of it, not conciliatory.

"If you want the Herr Justizrath," said this stately dame, "you must go round by the back-door to his study. He receives no one on business by this entrance."

"My business is——" began Peters mildly. But the lady interrupted him.

"Excuse me, I do not seek to know your business. I make a point of never interfering with law matters. The Herr Justizrath is in his study."

"But," said Peters, a little nettled at this cavalier treatment, "I don't want to see the Herr Justizrath. I have neither the good fortune to know him as a friend, nor the ill-luck to need him as a lawyer. I suppose you are the mistress of the house?"

The lady made a magnificent bow, which might be translated into the vernacular, "I should rather think I am!"

"Then, if you please, madam, I should like, with your permission, to speak with your servant-maid, Elizabeth Lehmann. I have brought a parcel for her from her home."

"Liese!" exclaimed the lady sharply. "Liese is not within at this moment. I have sent her out on an errand, and she has already been twice the time necessary to do it in. You can leave your parcel on the table there, since you are here; but another time I beg you will be good enough to go round by the yard-gate. This entrance is only used by the family or our own visitors."

Peters was a man unapt to anger at all times; nevertheless he did feel considerable indignation at this lady's tone and manner. But Frau von Schleppers was stout and stately, with a deep voice and an unsympathising stare; and, above all, she was a woman! So

she frightened him. He put the little bundle down on the table without a word, and left the house.

The mistress of it waited to see him fairly off the doorstep, and then she closed the door with a bang, and walked, or rather waddled, away.

Peters adjusted his spectacles firmly on his nose, looked after her for a second, and exclaimed, with a short laugh, "Poor Justizrath von Schleppers! From my heart I pity thee!"

Then he turned towards his inn, feeling his spirits much relieved by this sarcastic ebullition. Herr Peters considered that he had been very bitter.

CHAPTER V.

THE PINK SATIN NOTE-PAPER.

It was true, as the apothecary had said, that before Otto Hemmerich had gone to Halle, the young man had been a frequent visitor at Lehmann's farm. Every one liked him there. Even Frau Hanne, who did not like many people, extended her favour to Otto. He was handy, he was cheerful, he was able and willing to do numberless odd jobs of carpentering for the thrifty housewife. He brought her heaps of ripe blackberries in the autumn, and store of hazel nuts. He helped in the apple-gathering, and did more work in play than the others got through in earnest. He mended, and made as good as new, some old leather harness that had hung disused for years in the stable. He cleaned and furbished up Franz Lehmann's rusty rifle, and with it shot,—hear it not, ye British sportsmen!—shot a fox that had for many a night made havoc among Frau Lehmann's fat geese. He caught and tamed a squirrel as a present for Liese; and moreover, partly manufactured with his own hands a cage to keep it in. In brief, his accomplishments were highly esteemed and appreciated at the farm, and he was a welcome guest on any holiday afternoon that he chose to spend there. But notwithstanding her personal predilection for Otto, Hanne Lehmann did by no means approve of the spirit of rebellion which,—rumour said,—he was manifesting towards his uncle. Frau Lehmann's own government of her family was an absolute despotism. She would have honestly scorned the idea of giving her subjects a constitution. Her husband's nominal position as head of the household may seem to us a little incompatible with this undisputed female supremacy. But Frau Hanne Lehmann never theorised. She knew what was best for everybody, and did it *proprio motu*. Otto's refusal to follow the profession his uncle had chosen for him was a high crime in Frau Lehmann's eyes. Above all was it a crime to decline to follow that special profession. A pastor! It was all that was respectable and reverend.

It gave a man authority in despite of youth, and rank in despite of humble birth. In fact, she looked upon it as a piece of unparalleled presumption on the part of a boy like Otto to decline preferment which she, Frau Hanne Lehmann, would have been glad of for a son of her own. And then the thought struck her that Otto and Liese had been allowed to be a great deal together, and that perhaps— Well, she would put a stop to that, at all events. She would have no rebellious notions put into Liese's head. And Franz was so foolish and soft-hearted that there was no knowing what concessions or promises he might be led to make if the young folks had a chance of talking him over. Otto paid a visit to the farm soon after his return from Halle, but he did not see Liese. He saw no one but the mistress of the house, who received him anything but graciously. Her husband, she said, was absent at Lemgo, selling some wheat. She supposed Otto knew his own business best,—though at his time of life that was scarcely likely,—but for her part she couldn't help thinking that it was a pity for him to go against his uncle Schnarcher. She should be sorry for their Lieschen to behave so, that was all.

"But, Frau Lehmann," cried Otto bluntly, "it is better to go against my uncle than against my conscience, isn't it?"

"Rubbish!" answered Frau Lehmann.

She was not strong in argument, and she didn't like being contradicted. Then Otto asked for Liese; and, to punish him, the Hausfrau simply said that he couldn't see her, without explaining that the good and sufficient reason why he could not see her was, that she was at that moment in the house of Frau von Schleppers, in Detmold. Then,—Hanne being one of those women who are capable of talking themselves into a passion on the shortest notice, and whose anger makes their tongues terribly unscrupulous,—she went on to say that she could not, as a matter of duty to Liese, approve of her having acquaintances whose ideas were so strongly at variance with all that a pious education had instilled into her mind; and that she must do the girl the justice to add, that she had heard Liese herself animadvert on the sin and evil of disobedience and presumption in young people. And so wound up a voluble and rather incoherent tirade, of which Otto understood very little, save that the Hausfrau was in a furious bad humour, and that Liese had been speaking unkindly of him and refused to see him.

Otto walked away from the farm with a heavy heart. Frau Lehmann's sharp speeches he might have borne with tolerable indifference; but Liese! Could she turn against him? And then his old friend Farmer Franz, too. He couldn't bear the idea of losing his friendship. He would go again to the farm on the chance of seeing Lehmann. But then came the announcement of Simon Schnarcher's resolution to send his grand-nephew to the stationer's shop in Det-

mold; and Otto's departure was so hurried that he had no time to revisit his friends at the farm.

The young man revolved all these things in his mind as he sat pasting the labels on to the photographs in Herr Schmitt's shop. He had refused to send greetings to Liese Lehmann, and now on reflection his heart misgave him somewhat for having so refused. Peters's announcement of Liese's being in Detmold had changed the aspect of affairs. Who knew how long she had been there? "But then, surely the Frau Lehmann would have told me the truth about her when I was at the farm?" thought honest Otto.

"If you please, have you any pink satin note-paper?" said a soft voice in his ear.

"Any what!" Otto jumped off his seat with a bound, and took two little cold hands in his. "Why, Liese, is it you? Thou dear Heaven!"

"Otto!" And the two cold little hands were left confidently in his, and a pair of brown eyes looked at him in glad surprise. Little Liese Lehmann was very small and shy. She had a clear fair skin, soft brown eyes, and silky hair of the same colour. This hair was coiled in a twisted knot at the back of her head, and one plaited tress was brought down low on either cheek, and put up behind the ears, after a fashion prevalent amongst German maidens. She wore a grey stuff gown, a blue cotton handkerchief pinned across her breast, and a large checked apron.

"Dear Lieschen!" said Otto, "I had only just heard by accident that you were in Detmold. How goes it, Lieschen? Do tell me, are you well? Are you content here?"

He was too glad to see her to think of any ground of offence he imagined himself to have against her.

"And I,—did you think I knew that you were here, Otto? I never was so surprised to see anybody!"

It needed not many words between the two young people to explain the history of Otto's visit to the farm, and of Liese's having been kept in ignorance of his coming. Neither of them had a suspicion that Frau Lehmann's desire to keep them asunder originated in any other motive than her disapproval of Otto's persistence in opposing his uncle Schnarcher. Every one who knew Hanne well was accustomed to see great anger arise from causes seemingly quite inadequate to produce it. None of her household or family ever thought of asking what reason the Haus-frau could possibly have for resenting this or that. They said, "She is angry," much as they might say, "It thunders." Both were phenomena which they could neither control nor account for.

"But she shouldn't have told a lie, and said that you had spoken against me," said Otto. "As to what she thinks, that don't so much matter."

"Oh, Otto!" cried Liese timidly. This was a tremendous assertion, she thought.

"Well, it don't much matter to me, though Frau Lehmann used to be kind and friendly, too, in the old days. Do you recollect the apple-gathering two years ago?"

"Yes; and the time you brought her the blackberries."

"And the fun we had at hay-harvest, Lieschen!"

"And that day when Claus got tipsy, and you chopped the wood for fuel, and nearly cut your finger off. Oeh Himmel! How frightened we were! But you didn't say a word. Cousin Hanne said you had the right manful courage. She likes folks to be brave. I ain't a bit brave. I remember she boxed my ears for crying when I saw the blood flow."

"What a shame!" cried Otto indignantly.

"Well, but, Otto," remonstrated gentle little Lieschen, "you know if we had all cried, and done nothing else, you might have bled to death. But I was only a child then. I hope I should be more helpful now."

"Yes; you are not a child any more, Liese. You are the same, and yet somehow not the same. You have grown so,—so different."

No human being had ever told Liese that she was pretty. And it may be doubted whether Otto had ever thought of considering whether she was so or not until that moment. But as he looked straight into her innocent, upraised eyes, he made up his mind very decisively on the subject.

"Yes; I've grown an inch," said she simply. Then they talked of Otto's prospects, and of his uncle Schnarcher. And Liese ventured timidly to ask Otto if it were not a pity that he could not be a pastor. It was so beautiful, she thought, to teach and comfort the poor people, and tell them good tidings to brighten their hard lives. And Otto, in the superior wisdom of his manhood and his two-and-twenty years, had to explain to Liese's simplicity why it would be impossible for him to play this lofty part in life well, and how wrong it would be to undertake it whilst his conscience told him clearly that he must fill it badly. And Liese listened with humility, and said that of course Otto knew best, and that it was right and brave of him to speak the truth that God put into his heart. And then,—the town clocks struck one! Liese jumped as if a bomb had burst in the shop.

"Oh dear, oh dear," she cried in dismay, "there's one going by the parish church! And there's the castle clock now striking the last quarter. Oh, please, have you any pink satin note-paper? I couldn't find it at the shop where we generally deal, and that delayed me, and now I've been talking here and forgetting the time. My mistress told me to make haste. Oh dear, oh dear!"

Otto lost not a moment in searching for the required article, and

after opening sundry drawers and boxes, he came upon a small store of it.

"Two sheets, please, and two envelopes," said Lieschen, who had been watching his proceedings anxiously. "How much is it?"

"I don't know. Pay me the next time you come by. Here it is, Liese. And, I say, you'll find a parcel at home for you. Herr Peters from Horn has been over, and——"

But Liese had taken up her little packet, and with a hasty farewell nod, had run out of the shop with it. She sped along at a pace very seldom seen among the sober denizens of Detmold. More than one housewife turned to look after "*Frau von Schleppers' maiden*," and shook their heads disapprovingly. But Liese was unconscious of their looks. Her heart was beating fast,—partly from the haste she was making, partly from agitation. The surprise and pleasure of seeing Otto, disappointment at having missed Herr Peters, who doubtless had brought news from the farm, self-reproach at her delay, and dread of her mistress's displeasure, were all jumbled together in the poor child's mind. Still she sped on with agile feet, when, on turning the corner of a street, she ran against somebody. Some very heavy body it seemed, for Liese's light figure bounded off it again like a shuttlecock, and on looking up, her eyes encountered the stern and astonished gaze of no less a personage than *Frau von Schleppers* herself.

CHAPTER VI.

FRAU MATHILDE'S TEA-PARTY.

FRAU MATHILDE VON SCHLEPPERS considered herself to be beyond question the leading character amongst the *dramatis personæ* of her somewhat limited society. Her self-importance was boundless. "*We Von Schlepperses* are not rich," she would say grandly, "but we are noble." It was true that the Justizrath was descended from the younger branch of a respectable old family. They could scarcely be termed "*noble*," but they had been gentlefolks time out of mind. Now the *Frau Mathilde's* papa had been court shoemaker in Hanover. The good lady would volubly discourse of the "*dear Baroness This*," or the "*charming Countess That*," giving odd little personal details about them that would seem to argue a great intimacy on her part with these aristocratic dames. But the fact was, she had never seen them out of her father's shop. People in Detmold, however, knew nothing about that; and it was so long ago that *Frau von Schleppers* herself seemed to have forgotten the true circumstances of her early life. She and her husband had endured many vicissitudes before coming to settle in Detmold. Their fortune seemed inclined to smile upon them. The Justizrath gained a lawsuit for a member of

the princely family, and in return received some courtesies from an illustrious personage. This circumstance fanned Mathilde's smouldering aspirations into flame. She gave herself airs of aristocratic hauteur, boasted of an invitation she had had to the Castle, and constantly reverted to the nobility of the Von Schlepperses.

At first some laughed, some sneered, some quarrelled with her. But in the end many people succumbed to her assumption of superiority. To such as did so she took care not to be too civil,—which caused a great many other people to succumb also. Meanwhile, her husband, the Justizrath, steadily increased his connection, and established a reputation throughout the principality as being a sound, cautious, old-fashioned lawyer. By the time at which this story begins, Frau von Schleppers, if not altogether so great a woman as she fancied herself, was undeniably somebody in Detmold.

Liese's life in service had hitherto been fairly comfortable. Frau von Schleppers was reputed to be a difficult mistress to content. But Liese was humble, submissive, and constitutionally incapable of giving a pert answer. She had been well instructed by Hanne in all branches of domestic industry. And she had, moreover, an air of natural refinement and modesty which her mistress felt was creditable to the gentility of her establishment. But for a week following her interview with Otto poor Liese led but a sad life of it.

"Barmherziger Himmel!" exclaimed Frau von Schleppers tragically, "to think of a young person in my employ tearing through the public streets in that indecorous manner!" And then she would treat Liese to a twentieth repetition of the severe lecture which she had pronounced on the day of that great misdemeanour. And it must be owned that circumstances had combined to aggravate Frau von Schleppers's wrath. When Liese had rushed against her mistress in the street the latter was not alone. She was walking with a new acquaintance, a hochwohlgeborne dame, the wife of a major in the prince's service. And this was not the worst. The pink satin note-paper had been needed to write an invitation to this very lady, and to impress her with an idea of Mathilde's elegance in the most trifling details. But, lo! the unhappy Liese, frightened, bewildered, taken by surprise, and trembling under her mistress's stern gaze, blurts out breathlessly that the pink satin paper could not be found in such a shop, but was at last discovered in such another,—that she had purchased two sheets, for which she had not paid, but which she supposed could not come to more than a groschen,—and adds, by way of averting her mistress's wrath, that she is very sorry to be so late, but that she had carefully set the cabbage-soup on the fire before coming away from home. Such a jumble of vulgarities was mortifying, it must be allowed. Cabbage-soup and elegant stationery, laid in a couple of sheets at a time!

When the major's high, well-born wife did come to tea, Liese scarcely dared to meet her eye as she handed round the cakes and the bread and butter. There were two or three other ladies present, each with her little bundle of fancy work; but the major's wife, Frau von Groll, was the bright, particular star of the party. She was a wizened, greedy little woman, who gobbled up the crisp tea-cakes at a terrible rate. But Frau von Schleppers did not care for that. She thought her tea-cakes well paid for when Frau von Groll, having devoured the last fragment of them, observed that those she had eaten the other evening at the Castle were not half so good.

"I'm not sure that I quite like the Castle tea-cakes myself," said Frau von Schleppers musingly.

Liese, engaged in waiting on the ladies, did not find this kind of talk very interesting. She supposed it must be her rustic education which prevented her from enjoying it as the "quality" seemed to do. Presently her attention was attracted by the mention of a name which had been familiar to her in Otto's mouth,—"*Hermann.*"

"*The Hermann's Denkmal.*"

"You have not seen it yet, I suppose?" said a bony spinster, addressing Frau von Groll. The speaker was a lady of undoubted gentility, who existed on an infinitesimally small pension, which she enjoyed in consideration of her late father's services in some office in the princely household. "You have not been here long enough to have visited all the spots of interest around Detmold."

"No," answered Frau von Groll. "I don't generally care about seeing places. In my own country,—the so-called Saxon Switzerland,—people make a great fuss about the scenery; but, for my part, I can't find it charming. When you are not clambering up-hill, you are sure to be scrambling down-hill; and what pleasure is there in that? I like a nice flat pavement, or neat gardens, such as those at the Herrenhausen Palace in Hanover."

"Ah, dear Herrenhausen!" sighed Frau Mathilde, plaintively and parenthetically.

"Oh, really!" rejoined the bony spinster, who was romantic. "I adore scenery. And the view from the Hermann's Denkmal is entrancing. *Himmlisch schön!* But then you certainly have to go up-hill for it."

"What is the Hermann's Denkmal?" asked Frau von Groll of her hostess.

"Well, it,—it isn't anything exactly, just now."

"Isn't anything?"

"That is to say, it is only a sort of,—of stone,—what do you call it?—a thing that they put statues on."

"Pedestal," suggested the spinster.

"Yes, a pedestal. Only it's very big, and there are stairs inside; and you go up to the top, and the wind is awful there. Very few

days in the year are there when it doesn't blow a gale up on the Grotenberg."

"There is to be a colossal statue of Hermann there some day," said the spinster enthusiastically; "an heroic figure with a helmet and a drawn sword defying everybody like this." And the Fräulein brandished a long knitting-needle above her head.

"Ach!" exclaimed a stout, placid matron, who had not yet spoken, "that will look terrible."

"Well," asked Frau von Groll, rather contemptuously, "and who was this Hermann of yours? I never heard of him."

Mathilde von Schleppers positively envied the major's wife as the latter made this cool admission. There was something in rank, after all, which gave one wonderful courage, she thought. The Justizrath's wife had often longed to ask "who was this Hermann of yours?" But she had not dared to confess her ignorance.

Then the spinster explained to the hochwohlgeborne lady that Hermann had been a hero and patriot, who defended his fatherland in arms.

"Humph!" said Frau von Groll, pressing her thin lips together. "A patriot who fought for fatherland, and they are going to put up a statue to him? That sounds to me rather revolutionary."

Frau von Schleppers shook her head solemnly in a manner intended to imply that the same thought had given her many an uneasy moment.

"Oh, but," cried the spinster, "it was so long ago! And he fought against the Romans. Of course it would be very different now."

Liese carrying away the tea-cups wondered very much why it would be "so different now." She pondered over the question as she sat at her work in the kitchen, and resolved to ask Otto all about it the next time she should see him. When would that be, though? She had not hitherto dared to allude to the fatal pink satin note-paper. But now she remembered that it was not yet paid for, and she thought she would venture to ask her mistress's leave to go to the shop to discharge the debt. After all, it was a week ago, and the storm had pretty nearly spent itself, and the gnädige Frau, the high-born major's wife, had been to tea, and nothing dreadful had happened in consequence of her (Liese's) ill-bred revelation about the cabbage-soup. Yes; she thought she would venture to ask.

Presently the Justizrath came peering into the kitchen to get a light for his meerschaum. He was a snuffy little old man whose clothes were too large for him, and he wore red slippers down at heel. The Justizrath generally spent his evenings at the Blue Pigeon in company with a few old cronies; but on this occasion he had been kept at home by some law papers which required close attention. He always wrote in what his wife called his study.

It was a small, rather dark den, redolent of tobacco smoke, and littered with chaotic heaps of manuscript. Small as it was, there was a stove in it, so that the Herr Justizrath did not, at all events, suffer from the cold there. But the bright glow of the kitchen fire was pleasanter than the dull, suffocating heat of the stove. Everything in the kitchen was as clean as hands could make it, and cleanliness, like sunshine, has the power to beautify common things. And there sat little Liese, the fire-light playing on her soft brown hair, and reddening the folds of her grey gown. She was industriously hemming a neckerchief,—the real Manchester print neckerchief that Hanne had sent her,—and her neat figure and modest face supplied a homely grace to this domestic scene. It was an interior such as Meissonier might have painted.

The Justizrath lit his pipe and sat down by the fire. Liese stood up respectfully, work in hand, but he took no notice of her. The Justizrath had the character of being very absent. He would look at you vacantly when you spoke to him, and answer wide of the mark. But three weeks afterwards he was capable of correcting you in the minutest details of the interview, and of repeating your words letter by letter. He did not frequently choose to betray himself by doing so. It was convenient enough sometimes that people should behave in his presence as though he were a hundred miles away. But many were the unwary mice who had been terribly startled by the discovery that this motionless old Puss-in-Boots had been watching them unwinkingly with his half-shut eyes.

Liese sat down again after a while, drawing her chair away modestly into a corner, and stitching with downcast eyes. At first it made her uncomfortable to have her master sitting there silently staring at her out of a cloud of tobacco smoke. But by-and-by the feeling of shyness wore off. The Herr Justizrath wasn't thinking of her. No doubt his thoughts were busy with some of those wonderful law papers that she was forbidden to dust or move. Dear, dear, how clever and learned he must be to understand them all! And then she began to muse in a vague kind of way about the Hermann's Denkmal, and to wonder once more why it should be wrong and revolutionary to be a patriot nowadays. As she so mused, her lips unconsciously formed the words, "I wonder."

"Eh?" said the Justizrath sharply.

Leise knocked down the scissors by the great jump she gave, and her work nearly fell from her hand.

"Bitte, Herr Justizrath! I beg pardon," she stammered out.

"What's the matter?" asked her master mildly. "Were you not saying something?"

"N—no, I,—that is, I think I was thinking."

"Ah! So! You think you were thinking. Good. I think I was thinking too, but one never can tell."

There ensued so long a pause that Leise began to recover her composure. The Justizrath was so odd and abstracted. No doubt he had forgotten her very existence by this time. She ventured to glance at him timidly, and found his eyes fixed on a boar ham that dangled from the ceiling. But at the instant in which she looked, he said, without removing his gaze from the ham, "What about?"

"What about, sir?"

"What did you think you were thinking about?"

Liese blushed crimson. She felt very shy of discussing the subject of her meditations with the Herr Justizrath. But with her habitual obedient gentleness she answered, "About patriots, please, sir."

This was by no means the kind of answer which the Herr Justizrath had expected. He prided himself on a great power of reading faces; and not less did he pride himself on the inscrutability of his own countenance. There had been a tender half-smile on Liese's downcast face which had induced him to watch it with some curiosity. But he certainly had not conjectured that the tender half-smile had been called up by thinking about "patriots." No trace of surprise, however, did he allow to appear on his wrinkled face, or in his dry, subdued voice. Herr von Schleppers was a man who had fought the battle of life in ambush, so to speak. His nature and his tactics were alike opposed to coming out into the open.

"Any special patriot, Liese, or only patriots in general?" he asked gravely. Liese had no suspicion that she was being laughed at. Banter was a thing entirely out of her experience.

"I was thinking of Hermann, sir."

"Ah! So! And is Hermann a patriot?"

Herr von Schleppers complacently supposed himself to have gained the clue to that shy, tender smile. Since Liese was a member of his household, it might be as well to know all about this Hermann. Sweethearts were inevitable evils; but a sweetheart who was also a patriot might prove too troublesome. The Justizrath made a point of knowing all about everybody with whom he had any dealings or relations in life. A large undertaking, one would say. But he fancied he accomplished it.

"Hermann," repeated Liese doubtfully, "I,—I,—believe he's dead, sir. He is renowned, I know."

"Oho! And you think people are never renowned until they're dead, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

The Justizrath became interested. Liese proceeded, gaining courage as she saw her master's eyes still upturned meditatively, more as though he was talking to himself than to her.

"I know he fought for fatherland against the Romans; and that was right and good. There is the Denkmal on the Grotenberg that folks may remember him; but I was wondering,—you know I am but

an ignorant country maiden,—I couldn't help wondering why it would not be right and good now."

"Now where the deuce did the girl pick up all this?"

That was what the Justizrath thought.

What he said was, "Ay, ay, indeed? Ach so!" and waited to hear more. Just then the door of the sitting-room up-stairs was opened, and a sound of voluble and confused speech came forth. Above all other sounds, however, penetrated the shrill voice of Frau von Schleppers calling Liese.

"Oh, the ladies are going home, Herr Justizrath!" said the girl "I must run and help them with their hoods and cloaks," and she darted off.

When the honoured guests were trooping down-stairs, they encountered the master of the house, pipe in hand, gazing confusedly from one to the other.

"Pardon, meine Damen," said he, bowing. The Justizrath's bow was peculiar. He always wore a mass of limp, and too often dingy, muslin round his throat, and when he bowed, he merely stretched his neck so as to thrust his bald head a little way out of this envelope, and then drew it in again, in a way that reminded one irresistibly of a tortoise.

"Friedrich!" exclaimed his lady wife, with her most imperious air. "Now that is so like you! You bury yourself in your papers, and forget how time goes altogether. We wanted you among us this evening. Here is the Frau von Groll."

"Ach Himmel! I am so distressed! But you know I am a man of small leisure. There were all those papers in the affair of His Serene—I mean I have been very busy, meine Damen, very busy indeed."

"He is so absent," whispered Mathilde to her chief guest. "It is really terrible. But all these learned men are alike, I fancy. You will excuse the Justizrath on this occasion."

The ladies took their leave, and pattered home through the silent streets. As they went they observed to each other how henpecked the poor Justizrath was, and how much in awe he seemed to be of his wife. But in this opinion they were entirely mistaken, as it sometimes happens, even to our intimate acquaintances to be, in their judgments of us.

CHAPTER VII.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

On the day after Frau Mathilde's tea-party, Liese asked and obtained permission to go to Schmitt's shop and pay for the pink satin note-paper. Her mistress was in good humour. Frau von Groll had paid

handsomely for her tea-cakes in words which would pass current in Detmold "society," as being good for a considerable amount of deference. Besides that, the romantic spinster Fräulein Bopp, had,—not to be behindhand in politeness,—compared Liese to a picture of Goethe's Gretchen which she had seen once in the private sitting-room of a member of the princely family. "You are like the dear Princess!" Fräulein Bopp had exclaimed to her hostess. "You love to surround yourself with the Beautiful! That maiden's face is ganz poetisch!" And Frau von Schleppers had professed that she thought she might venture to say she resembled her gracious highness in her absorbing devotion to the Beautiful. This profession had not been made in the presence of Herr von Schleppers; but even had he heard it, it would have caused no uncomfortable emotion in his breast. For did he not know full well how far higher a thing is spiritual beauty than any mere perfection of form? And, judged by this standard, his Mathilde doubtless deemed her husband's loveliness seraphic.

"Yes," said Frau von Schleppers, in answer to Liese's application; "yes, child, go and pay for the paper, and bring me another ball of grey worsted for the Herr Justizrath's socks. And mind you have your hair neat and nice. People know by this time that you are in my service, so it is of some little consequence how you look."

Liese had not long departed on her errand when the Justizrath shuffled into the kitchen. His down-trodden slippers made a clapping noise on the stone floor, and caused his wife to look up in surprise. That excellent lady, who was too thorough a German not to be a good housewife, was engaged in peeling and shredding onions for the soup. She prided herself on her cookery, and really was never so happy as when she could cover her gown with a large apron and devote her energies to the preparation of the daily food. But mere happiness was not Mathilde von Schleppers' end and aim. Noblesse oblige!

The Justizrath shuffled into the kitchen and shuffled to the fireplace, and stood there warming his hands.

"Do you want anything, Friedrich?" asked his wife. He made no answer, but slowly rubbed his wrinkled hands together over the red charcoal fire made up for cooking.

Mathilde was not a very acute woman, but she had been the Justizrath's wife for thirty years, and in the course of that time she had gained a very thorough knowledge of his disposition. She could not have made a psychological analysis of Friedrich von Schleppers' character, but she knew it in a dumb, instinctive way, as a dog knows the nature of his master. Mathilde was quite aware that her husband had perfectly heard and understood her question, so she did not repeat it, but went on shredding the onions, and occasionally wiping her eyes with a corner of her apron.

"What were you women talking about last night?" asked the Justizrath, presently, in his subdued, monotonous voice.

"Lord, Friedrich! I don't know, I'm sure."

There was a pause.

"Well?" said the Justizrath, by-and-by.

"Well;—let me see:—Dear, how the onions make one's eyes smart!—Frau von Groll said my tea-cakes were better than the tea-cakes at the Castle."

"Has she ever eaten or drunk in the Castle?"

"O yes, that she has! They're quite in the Court set, the von Grolls. Why else do you suppose I asked them here?"

The Justizrath nodded gently.

"Well, Friedrich; and it's true that Major von Groll is to be the new land-steward of the Prince's Detmold estates."

"Ah, yes," murmured von Schleppers, abstractedly.

"But it won't make a bit of difference to you. All the law business will be left in your hands. The old land-steward was a sharp, prying fellow, who thought he could manage everything himself."

"Bopp was a good man of business, my dear, and very zealous for the Prince's interests. He thought he knew law, which was a mistake. But Bopp was a very good man of business."

"Ah, well; you'll be master now. See if I am not right."

In strictly private and confidential conversations Frau von Schleppers was apt to relax a little in the aristocratic majesty of her deportment, and to speak with more energy than dignity.

"Humph!" said the Justizrath, poking out his head from the muslin cravat, and then drawing it in again with the tortoise-like action.

"You'll see. Von Groll is as stupid as an owl. And he doesn't know a bit about the state of affairs here. His getting the appointment was all a matter of interest. He will have the salary and you will do the work. But then—you'll also have the power, Friedrich."

"Tut, tut, tut! What power? what power? Nonsense, nonsense!"

The Justizrath spoke quite sharply, and seemed genuinely displeased. He did not approve of such things being said, even in a tête-à-tête.

"Lord!" cried his wife, answering his thoughts, though not his words, "who is there to hear? And if they did, what matter? I should think you are the proper person to have the power, Friedrich. In our position it's only natural and fitting that we should help to take all trouble off the Prince's hands. He is away so much, and has so many occupations,—and, besides, the well-born can always understand each other. As far as that goes, I should hope the von Schleppers are as noble as the von Grolls!"

"There's no question of being well-born or ill-born," said the

Justizrath testily. "I hope you didn't talk in that way last night."

"Why, Friedrich?"

But to this question her husband did not reply. There ensued so long a silence that Mathilde began to think her liege lord had extracted all the information he desired for the present. But after a while, she felt that the catechism was not yet at an end. Von Schleppers said nothing, but he stood in an attitude of expectation, rubbing his hands over the fire, and turning his head sideways towards his wife.

"And then," she proceeded, "and then,—oh dear me, how can I recollect every word? Fräulein Bopp was a good deal taken with Liese. She says she is like a picture of Goethe's Gretchen, that she once saw in the Princess's private sitting-room. Do you think she is, Friedrich?"

"Let us hope so, my dear."

"Yes. It looks well to have nice-looking servants. I recollect the Countess von Stumpfennasen in Hanover—What did you say, Friedrich? Oh, about Fräulein Bopp. Well, she made up to Frau von Groll a good deal, and asked her if she had seen much of Detmold, and if she had been up to the Grotenberg to see the Hermann's Denkmal. I was vexed at the foolish romantic kind of way Fräulein Bopp talked in, for the major's wife didn't seem to approve of the Denkmal at all. But of course poor Fräulein Bopp, though her father was about his late blessed Highness so much, has no noble blood in her veins. And that makes such a difference!"

"How does the girl seem to get on?"

"Fräulein Bopp?"

"No; not Fräulein Bopp, Mathilde. I think I know pretty well how Fräulein Bopp gets on, and has been getting on any time these thirty years. I mean the little servant maid,—what do you call her?"

"Ah, to be sure. Well now, as to Liese——"

"Liese Lehmann."

Frau von Schleppers evinced no surprise at finding her husband quite well acquainted with the name he had just asked her to tell him, but went on:—

"Yes; as to Liese Lehmann, I have never had a fault to find with her but once, Friedrich."

Then Mathilde related to her husband the history of the pink satin note-paper, and of Liese's awkwardness.

"But," added the good lady, whose eyes and nose were by this time so inflamed as to give her countenance quite a pathetic expression, "after all, I don't think much of that. She is very rustic and untaught, but she is a creditable-looking girl, a good hand at pastry, darns a stocking the way I like, and we get her very cheap."

"No sweethearts?"

"Ach behüte! No, indeed. Not a soul has ever come to ask for

her since she has been in the house, except a person who brought her a bundle of clothes from Horn."

"What sort of person?"

"Rather a presuming person, I should say. Decently clad, certainly, but a common fellow. Came ringing at the front door instead of going round to the back yard."

"I think that sounds rather like a patriot," muttered the Justizrath.

"What, Friedrich?"

"I say that if he comes again I should like to see him. The girl is under our protection, and we are bound to look after her."

"I'll look after her, never fear!" said Frau von Schleppers majestically. Then she knew that the catechism was over; for although the Justizrath stood for some minutes longer warming his hands, he turned his face towards the fire, and paid no further attention to his wife.

Meanwhile Liese, having duly executed her mistress's commission respecting the grey worsted, tripped at as fast a pace as she dared towards Herr Schmitt's shop in the main street. There was no one in the shop when she entered it, but on tapping on the counter, a boy appeared,—a boy with a pale long face, and his jaws bound up with a black silk handkerchief. Liese had made so sure of seeing Otto that this cadaverous apparition startled her, and she stared at the boy for a moment unable to speak.

"I—I—want to know, please,—how much,—what is the price of pink satin note-paper?" she stammered out at length.

"Haven't got any," said the cadaverous boy, in a despondent tone of voice.

"No; but I want to,—to,—pay for it."

"I didn't expect you thought you'd get it for nothing!" retorted the boy gloomily.

"No; but I did have some last week, and I want to pay for it. How much is it, please?"

"I didn't sell it you; and, what's more, I don't believe there is any in the shop."

"O, indeed there is! I bought some: two sheets and two envelopes. Ask Herr Schmitt, or,—or the other gentleman."

"Herr Schmitt's ill in bed, and the other assistant is out. I tell you what it is, you'll have to come back again. I don't know what the paper costs. It may be two kreutzers or it may be four. I ain't going to name a fancy price, and get myself into trouble to oblige you. I haven't been here more than ten days, and you can't expect a chap to get a whole shopful of things by heart in that time. Specially if he's subject to the toothache."

"I'm very sorry," said Liese, gently. "I'll call again the next time I go by."

"Yes," said the cadaverous boy, a shade less gloomily; "it won't be any trouble to you, you know."

"Would you mind telling Otto that I think I can come on my way from the market to-morrow morning?"

"Telling who?"

Liese blushed crimson. "The assistant: I know him. Say Liese Lehmann, please."

As she left the shop she encountered her master walking at a brisk pace up the street. Contrary to her expectation, he recognised and stopped her.

"Tell your mistress, little one," said he, "that I shall not be at home until to-night, at all events, and perhaps not until to-morrow morning. Business will take me to Horn."

"Oh!" cried Liese, and then stopped short.

"Ay, ay," said the Justizrath, benevolently; "that's your home, isn't it? To be sure,—to be sure. Your father and mother live there, eh?"

"Not quite in Horn, sir, but just outside it. You pass the farm going to Horn from Detmold. And they ain't my father and mother, sir, but my cousins. My poor mother's cousin, that is, and they adopted me. I beg your pardon, sir."

Liese added the last sentence timidly, for the Justizrath's attention was apparently far removed from what she was saying, and he was absently forming letters on the pavement with the point of his walking-stick.

"Eh?" said he, looking up when she had ceased speaking. "Ah! No doubt;—no doubt, my good girl." And then he walked on, getting over the ground more quickly than one would have given him credit for, looking at his awkward, shuffling pace. As he passed Schmitt's shop, he looked in and beheld the cadaverous boy seated behind the counter with his head resting on his hands, and a sheet of coloured prints spread before him.

"That isn't the patriot," said the Justizrath to himself, with a transient grin. "No, no; the patriot must be the gentleman who rings at the front-door bell. I shall hear of him in Horn."

THE ELECTORAL OUT-LOOK.

UPWARDS of a year has now elapsed since Parliament, under the premiership of Lord Derby, took that "leap in the dark" which, according to his famous phrase, formed the best description of the late Reform Bill. Twelve months is a very brief period in the history of a nation; but still it is long enough to enable us to form some sort of opinion as to the character of a political crisis. If we as a nation did really take a leap in the dark, we ought by this time to be pretty well aware whether we have landed on our feet or on our head. It is quite true we have not yet gone through the decisive trial which alone can place us in a position to estimate the full significance, or want of significance, of the change we have introduced into our political system. Still, coming events cast their shadow before; and though we are as yet under the régime of an unreformed Parliament; though the exact character of the new Parliament which is to be elected within a few weeks' time has yet to be ascertained, we can make up our minds with some degree of certainty as to the nature of the changes which await us in the immediate future. After our leap in the dark, we may not yet have got back to the light; but we already feel instinctively that we are coming to the surface. In order, then, to form any opinion of what our condition will be when we have finally emerged from darkness into light, we must try and estimate the standing ground we have already reached.

Now, at the first glance, it would certainly seem as if there was little or nothing changed in our political position. To paraphrase the historic saying which, oddly enough, is ascribed indiscriminately to Charles II. of England and Louis XVIII. of France, on their return from exile, we may say that there is no change whatever, except a householder the more. And this estimate, we may add, is one formed both by those who hoped most, and those who feared most, from the results of the Reform Bill which enfranchised the borough householders of the United Kingdom. Everything seems running in the same old grooves. The cry which from time immemorial has inaugurated the commencement of the Christmas pantomime season, might,—if so undignified a metaphor can be pardoned,—be applied to the great political transformation-scene on which the curtain is about to rise. "Here we are again!" seems pretty well to describe the position of the day. We are about, as it would appear, to have once more the old parties, the old cries, the old measures, the old leaders, the old

tactics, and, to a great extent, the old men. On every side,—sometimes in exultation, sometimes in disappointment,—we hear the statement that the new Parliament will be very much such as its predecessor,—the new governors of the State very like the old.

Universal convictions of this kind are very apt to bring about their own fulfilment; and, whatever our personal wishes may be, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that this general expectation is tolerably certain to be correct. We can at least safely predict that the first elections after the Reform Bill of 1867 will not be accompanied by anything resembling the outburst of popular feeling which followed the passing of the Reform Bill of 1831. If we look through the programmes, speeches, and political professions of faith which have already been issued in anticipation of the approaching elections, we can discern therein no very marked and violent change from those which accompanied the elections of 1865. We know pretty well by this time what seats are likely to be contested,—who are the favourites at each contested election; and, though we cannot predict with certainty what candidate will win, we know that the number of outsiders who are likely to head the poll is extremely limited. That this is so, as a matter of fact, no competent observer would, we think, dispute. The causes, however, to which the existence of this fact may be assigned are very various; and yet its significance depends entirely on the consideration whether these causes are transitory or permanent, accidental or fundamental. It may be that the new electoral body, as constituted by the Reform Bill, is on the whole well satisfied with things as they are, and desires no change in what for them is, as Tories deem it, the best possible of worlds. It may be so,—but it is extremely improbable on antecedent grounds that it should be so; and we deem the phenomenon, such as it is, may be accounted for on much less abnormal grounds. In the first place, in politics, as in physics, the impetus is always in proportion to the strength of the force which created it; and we cannot prudently forget that Household Suffrage was not enacted in obedience to any overwhelming popular demand. Of course it is possible to argue, as the authorities of the Reform League are fond of doing, that if this act of popular justice had been delayed there would have been a terrible manifestation of public feeling.

But of all idle controversies, the most useless is to discuss whether something would have happened if something else, which did happen, had not happened. We neither dispute, therefore, nor admit the statement that the angry millions would have risen in their wrath and might, at the appeal of Messrs. Baxter Langley and Bradlaugh, if the Reform Bill of last year had not been passed. All we know is, that that appeal,—whether fortunately or unfortunately,—was not uttered, and that, in consequence, the excitement which such an appeal might have evoked is necessarily wanting. The truth is, Household Suf-

franchise was granted,—not, we think, before it was urgently needed, but assuredly before it was urgently demanded; and boons given under such circumstances are never received with the intense satisfaction derived from the acquisition of privileges loudly and fiercely called for. Moreover, up to the present time, nobody seems to have formed any very clear or definite conception of the extent to which the new Reform Bill altered the distribution of political power; and of all classes, the newly enfranchised ones have probably the most indistinct impressions on the subject. It is curious to observe how universal the uncertainty is about the practical operation of the new Reform Act. In every constituency where any serious contest is anticipated, the acutest electioneering agents will say, with scarcely an exception, that they know too little of the conditions of the electoral problem to offer any reliable solution. What the number of the new electors will be, how far they will qualify themselves to exercise the franchise, on what side they will exert it, or what influences they will be especially amenable to, are all questions to which no satisfactory answer can yet be given. The result of this uncertainty is, that the fact of Household Suffrage has hardly come home as yet to the mass of the new voters; and, therefore, the practical management of the forthcoming elections remains in much the same hands as those which have hitherto transacted it, and will be conducted on much the same methods. And what has perhaps more to do with the apparent lack of excitement throughout the country,—there is no question before the public, which,—in England, at any rate,—appeals very strongly to popular passions or class interests. After all, the Irish Church, whether for good or bad, is not a subject which comes home in any very marked way to the average English elector. Of this we shall have something to say shortly. For the present it is enough to point out the obvious fact, that if the Irish Church is disestablished, it will be because the majority of the nation has set its heart on having a Liberal Government in office. The converse of the proposition could not be affirmed, namely, that if a Liberal Government comes into office it will be because the majority of the nation has set its heart on having the Irish Church disestablished.

These reasons seem to us to account not unsatisfactorily for the circumstance that the great political crisis through which we have passed seems likely to be unattended with such immediate results as were confidently expected not long ago. Under ancient institutions like our own, in which social changes are not necessarily coincident with political ones, any rapid transfer of electoral power is almost out of the question. We remember once being present at a conversation between mathematicians, when one of the party asserted as an axiom that water always finds its own level. The assertion was immediately qualified by a more cautious student with the retort, “Yes; but only after a time.” So it is in politics. Power, like other fluid

substances, will find its own level, but only after a time. Yet, sooner or later, we cannot doubt that the accidental and artificial obstacles which delay the transfer of power to the new electoral body will be swept away. The ultimate sovereignty must reside with the classes who possess the numerical majority of votes, and who therefore have in their own hands the power of nominating the virtual government of the country. Now, whatever estimate may be taken of the working of our remodelled constitution, thus much may be assumed without fear of contradiction,—in all our large boroughs, and in a very considerable proportion of our small ones, the power of returning members will be intrusted to the artisan and operative class. In what way this change will practically work, we can judge to some extent by our past experience. For the last five-and-thirty years a like power has practically been committed to the small tradesmen and shopkeepers of our boroughs. We have not, in consequence, had a Parliament of tradesmen,—we have not had our national policy directed, to any very marked extent, by the principles or prejudices of the class in question. But yet, in all our legislation, and in all our foreign administration, we have had to take the convictions, sympathies, and interests of this class, more or less, into account. In adopting any line of policy, every ministry and every party has had to consider the contingency of exciting the hostility of the class which, if it chose to exert its power, could pretty well determine the character of Parliament. In fact, we may say, that since 1831 the lower middle-class has enjoyed a right of veto on all important political measures,—a right none the less important because it has been exercised sparingly,—and that henceforward this right of veto must be handed over to the operative class. To explain our meaning, let us take one instance out of many. No candid person can deny that throughout the earlier period of the civil war in America, the majority of our legislators, and probably the majority of our statesmen, would have been inclined to render active assistance to the Confederacy, or at any rate to adopt measures which might probably have resulted in an open rupture between England and America. They were restrained from following the bent of their inclinations,—whether wisely or unwisely is not now the question,—by the knowledge that war would be too unpopular with the classes whose votes could turn the majority of the elections, for any policy of open alliance with the South to be adopted with impunity.

Again, we should doubt whether it would be possible to select at random, throughout the whole of England, six hundred and fifty-odd gentlemen who have less personal inclination than the Members of the House of Commons for Sabbatarianism or Total Abstinence. But yet whenever either of these topics is brought before Parliament it is treated with respect, and is supported at a division by a very creditable and influential minority. The reason of this anomaly is obvious. A large

section of our legislators represent constituencies in which the Non-conformist element is very powerful, and have to take into account the convictions, or, if you like, the prejudices of their constituents. A similar rule will hold good with reference to constituencies in which the artisan vote can turn the election. Upon the great majority of questions of the day working men are either indifferent or divided in opinion. But there are certain subjects on which their opinions are decided and unanimous; and on these subjects any member for a populous borough will be compelled either to "vote straight," or to give very satisfactory reasons for not so voting. For instance, when the question of Trades' Unions is brought, as it must be, before the reformed Parliament, it will be treated in a very different fashion from that which it has hitherto received under an electoral system wherein the working men's vote was of no great practical importance. How far this will be an advantage or otherwise we will not pretend to say. All we assert is, that as a matter of fact it will be so.

Now, unless we are mistaken, the course of the session now at its close has shown traces of the coming political change. Everything is disorganised, and the House of Commons, taken as a corporate body, has no very distinct idea of the degree to which the electoral conditions of the country are altered, or of the extent to which this alteration is likely to affect the local and personal interests of its members. But still a sort of instinctive feeling has gained ground, that the new constituencies will require more definite principles, a more rigid adherence to the party platform, than that which sufficed to satisfy their predecessors. The Adullamites have vanished into thin air at the mere approach of an appeal to the enlarged constituencies: "*Afflavit populus et dissipati sunt.*" There have been no Tea-room secessions in the Liberal camp, and the Opposition is once more united, not so much perhaps by virtue of any increased personal attachment to the Liberal leaders or the Liberal programme, as by the knowledge that the constituencies of the future would have no toleration for half-and-half Liberalism.

It is not, perhaps, very easy to define with exact accuracy how far the recent policy of the Opposition is the cause or the effect of the renewed energy of the Liberal party. Unless there had been a general conviction that the new constituencies would require the exercise of vigour, Mr. Gladstone could never have ventured on initiating so bold a measure as the disestablishment of the Irish Church. But, on the other hand, unless Mr. Gladstone had resolved on this course of action, we do not think the demand for a policy of action could possibly have attained its present proportions. The promptness with which Mr. Gladstone made up his mind at the critical moment, the energy with which he pushed his Bill forward through all its stages, and the unswerving resolution with which he

stuck to his purpose, in spite of open opposition and timid councils, and half-hearted support, seem to us to show that he possesses the highest attributes of a great political leader. It is the fashion to complain of certain deficiencies in tact and temper, which are supposed to interfere with Mr. Gladstone's popularity with his own supporters. What amount of truth there may be in these complaints we do not care to consider; but these defects, if they exist, do not affect his popularity with the country. At the hustings little value is attached to parliamentary tactics; and the wide sympathies, the enthusiasm, and even the indiscretions which characterise the Liberal leader have rendered him dear to the nation. He knows the temper of Englishmen, and that knowledge is the one thing above all others needful to an English leader. With all Mr. Disraeli's cleverness, and even genius, he lacks this essential quality; and, therefore, from time to time he commits blunders compared with which the gravest of Mr. Gladstone's alleged errors are absolutely Lilliputian.

It was this instinctive appreciation of English feeling which enabled Mr. Gladstone to see that the time was come when the question of the Irish Establishment could be dealt with successfully. Viewed as a political move, the introduction of the famous resolutions was a masterpiece of strategy. The series of Fenian disturbances which commenced in the attack at Tallaght, and culminated in the Clerkenwell explosion, had created throughout England an unspeakable disgust and uneasiness. The one well-nigh universal sentiment was that something must be done to remove the disaffection of which Fenianism was the out-come; and yet any proposition of a practical kind was surrounded with such a multitude of difficulties, presented such a mere choice of conflicting evils, that public opinion shrank from its endorsement. Six months ago, in discussing the prospects of the session, we stated that the disestablishment of the Irish Church was the only remedial measure for Ireland which could be advocated with any chance of success; and the result has more than justified our expectations. It would be a very narrow and short-sighted view to regard the policy pursued by the Liberal party towards Ireland as a mere party move. The proposal to establish religious equality in the sister kingdom is none the worse,—nay, in our opinion, is all the better,—for the simple and obvious fact that its adoption tends to consolidate the Liberal party, and to restore them once more to power. If we are to have party government at all, the policy of both parties must be influenced by consideration of the effect it is likely to produce on their position with the constituencies, and to deny this patent truth is either absurd or dishonest. We could never appreciate the use of the attempt so commonly made in political criticism to condemn a certain policy by endeavouring to prove that its advocates are not altogether disinterested in its advocacy. No doubt the Established Church in Ireland was as

much of an abuse ten or twenty years ago as it is at the present day; but till the public mind of the United Kingdom had grown prepared to make almost any sacrifice for the sake of peace and quiet in Ireland, no scheme for the abolition of the Establishment could have been put forward with any chance of being carried. To urge, therefore, that the Liberal leaders have waited to take ground upon the Irish Church question till public opinion was on their side, is only to say that they are practical statesmen, not abstract reformers. The world has need of both classes of teachers,—of the men who preach out of season as well as of those who preach in season; but to decry the latter because they do not fulfil the functions of the former is an act of palpable injustice.

Thus, when we commend the tact with which Mr. Gladstone has raised the question of the Irish Church, we have no intention of disparaging the merit of his statesmanship. On the contrary, we hold it a circumstance to his credit that the proximate result of his having so raised the question will be to reseat himself and his party in power.

That this is likely to be the result cannot well be doubted. Throughout the last two years the Liberals have been in a majority, not only in Parliament, but in the constituencies. The reason why their power was turned to no practical purpose was that the party could not agree on any definite policy. This defect has been removed. It would be difficult to conceive of any question on which all shades of Liberals could unite so cordially as on that of the Irish Church. The only cause for apprehension arose from the possibility that the staunch Protestantism of the country might resent any act which could be regarded as a concession to the Catholic faith. This apprehension so far appears to have been groundless. All attempts to raise a strong No Popery cry have collapsed ignominiously. The causes of this collapse can be easily understood. The working classes, as a body, are too little attached to any distinct religious organisation to entertain any vehement preference for Anglicanism over Catholicism; the shop-keeping classes, amongst whom the "odium theologicum" against Rome rages most fiercely, are so generally wedded to Nonconformist principles that they view with favour the disestablishment even of a Protestant Church; and the educated classes have, as a rule, singularly little sympathy for the peculiar type of Evangelicalism which is characteristic of the Establishment in Ireland. Moreover, the very persons who would naturally have rallied most eagerly to the No Popery standard raised by Mr. Disraeli have been deterred from so doing by the insane proposal of endowing a Catholic university with which, rightly or wrongly, the Government is still credited,—or discredited.

Thus, thanks to Mr. Gladstone, the Liberal party will go to the hustings with a clear, definite, and popular cry. And what is more

important, they will have a cry in whose sincerity the public cannot help believing. We have had so much of Liberal professions which never were carried out in action, so many pledges given in opposition and neglected in office, that the country had, to a certain extent, lost faith in the practical character of modern Liberalism. If, following the advice of many of his more cautious supporters, Mr. Gladstone had contented himself with getting the House of Commons to assent to an abstract resolution condemning the existence of the Irish Church, very slight importance would have been attached to an act which would have been regarded as a demonstration only. But now that the Suspensory Bill has actually been passed through the House of Commons, the Liberal party have burnt their ships behind them, and are committed, willing or unwilling, to the overthrow of the Irish Establishment. The confidence which is always bestowed on a party about whose earnestness there is no room for doubt, has been already conceded to the Opposition; and the very rejection of the reform by the House of Lords has given the measure a popularity which it would have lacked otherwise.

On the other hand, the Tory party has absolutely no cry with which to appeal to the constituencies. The Conservatives have lost all faith in the Toryism of their acknowledged leaders. Church and State, even if it was a good cry nowadays, which it is not, must be raised by other lips than those of Mr. Disraeli and his colleagues. Possibly it may be said that the programme of the Conservatives under Mr. Disraeli is not more barren than that of the Liberals under Lord Palmerston, and that not three years ago the country accepted the latter gladly. In the first place, circumstances are changed since then; in the second, there is all the difference in the world between the personal popularity of the two Premiers. It is the fashion in some quarters to talk of Mr. Disraeli as popular with the public. If by the public is meant the world of London and of the clubs, the statement is more or less correct. But the great outside public, the public which returns members to Parliament, neither respects nor appreciates the Premier. Lord Derby, with all his faults,—possibly by reason of his faults,—was a statesman of a stamp on which ordinary Englishmen always look proudly. But the very virtues of Mr. Disraeli, his freedom from prejudices, his coolness of judgment, are qualities which hardly commend him to the average English elector. The familiar, stereotyped commonplaces, so dear to the bucolic English mind, sound barren and jejune when uttered by Mr. Disraeli, and clad in Disraelite phraseology. The words, indeed, are as the words of Derby, but the voice is as the voice of Disraeli. In fact, as far as the Conservative party is concerned, the question submitted to the electors is simply this,—Shall we exert ourselves, and make heavy sacrifices, in order to keep a certain number of gentlemen with Conservative proclivities in office? And the answer

to this question is likely to be greatly affected by the personal popularity or lack of popularity of the gentlemen in question.

Thus our own opinion,—not as a matter of partisanship, but of calculation,—is strongly in favour of the chances of the Liberal party at the approaching contest. They have the advantage of a good cry,—of a distinct programme,—of a leader popular with the country,—and of great traditions which endear them to the constituencies. Strong in their own cause,—stronger still in the weakness of their opponents,—the Liberals, we believe, will carry the day easily. In fact, our fear is that the victory, if anything, will be too easy and too complete. For,—and this is a feature in the electoral out-look which seems to us of much importance,—it is by no means certain that the first election under the new Reform Bill will be by any means a test of what our elections hereafter are likely to be.

The new electors, in the first place, do not know their strength; the force of custom and precedent,—stronger, perhaps, in the lower classes of English society even than in the upper,—will tend to keep things at starting in the old groove; and then the question before the country,—whether a certain institution should or should not be upheld in Ireland,—is not one which appeals strongly to the masses. We cannot, therefore, assume that the probable triumph of the Liberals at the polls next autumn will necessarily be the forerunner of a series of successes. We are not disposed to overrate Mr. Disraeli's power of prescience; but still it seems incredible that a man of his ability should have deliberately prepared and created a change in our electoral system which must infallibly exclude his own party from office. It is evident the Tory leaders think, or at any rate profess to think, that the new conditions of the constituencies will tell in their favour. We hear little now, and we shall probably hear less, of the safeguards and limitations by which the democratic tendencies of the ministerial measure were supposed to be kept within due bounds. But yet, notwithstanding the fact that these limitations have been discarded one after the other, we still find the Conservatives confident that the net result of the electoral revolution will be in their favour. The reason for this faith is of a kind which its holders are somewhat shy of confessing openly. But in itself it is intelligible enough. Nor can we see any reason for shrinking from a confession of the fact that the faith is not altogether unjustified. Henceforward, as we have stated above, the ultimate power of determining the character of Parliament will rest with classes who live by the week's wages. This "residuum,"—to adopt the phrase of the day,—will, so Mr. Disraeli expects, be amenable to various influences of a more or less corrupt kind; and as the Tories are more adroit and more unscrupulous in employing these influences than their opponents, they will,—so at least their leader imagines,—reap the benefit of the admission of the artisans within the electoral pale.

In confirmation of this belief the champions of Conservatism can point to the municipal elections. From henceforth the parliamentary and municipal franchises,—in England at all events,—will be practically identical. Now any one acquainted with English boroughs could point to instance after instance where the members are uniformly Liberals, and where the civic officials are, as a rule, Conservatives. There is no good in mincing the truth. This anomaly is due to the circumstances that the class of voters who have hitherto had votes for the wards, but not for the boroughs, are accessible to bribery to a greater degree than a higher class, and that the Tory interest has generally been willing to bribe more freely than the Liberal. We do not think that this assertion conveys a very serious reproach upon the Conservative party. In maintaining themselves in power through purchasing or influencing votes, the advocates of keeping things as they are cannot be said to be false to their principles in the same way as their opponents. When party spirit runs high men will consent to almost any device for securing triumph. But we cannot see how any sincere Liberal can justify such consent in cool blood. Bribery is inconsistent with the doctrines of progress, both in theory and practice; it is perfectly consistent with those of Conservatism in theory as well as in practice. This, at least, is the only explanation we can offer for the notorious fact, that men of high character and integrity amidst the Conservative ranks will consent to corrupt practices for the sake of returning their candidates, which Liberals of much lower personal worth and reputation will shrink from using. We trust the time will never come when both parties are equally matched in the art of employing undue influences. At any rate, that time has not come; and wherever any large portion of a constituency is accessible to corrupt influences, the Liberals will necessarily be at a disadvantage.

The peril we have alluded to is not at all an imaginary one. It may be said that gross and direct bribery either is, or may be, rendered impossible by penal statutes. Even granting this, we do not clearly see how any legislation can prevent indirect, but yet substantial, corruption. It is not, as a rule, by paying so many shillings a head that the Conservatives obtain a majority of votes at the municipal elections. It is by subsidising publicans, by retaining local attorneys, by spending money freely, that the result is obtained. We are told by some persons that the reason why the municipal electors vote for Tory aldermen in Liberal boroughs is because no grave importance is attached to these elections, and that the very electors who vote the Tory ticket at ward contests will vote according to their principles under the sense of the far graver dignity and responsibility attaching to the exercise of the parliamentary franchise. We hope sincerely this conviction may prove to be correct; to some extent we think it will prove correct. But we confess we have little faith

in sudden wholesale conversions, even under the influence of agencies far more potent than the privilege of voting for a borough member.

Moreover, we do not feel quite so confident as most political authorities appear to be, that even supposing the "residuum" vote according to their principles without any corrupt influences being brought to bear upon them, they will infallibly record their votes for the Liberal candidates. We utterly and entirely disbelieve in the orthodox Tory creed, that the working classes are very well satisfied with things as they are; but we believe that their discontent, strong as it is, is rather of a social than of a political character; and, as yet, the Liberals as a party can hardly claim to have taken ground on social questions to a much greater extent than the Conservatives. Ultimately, no doubt, the mission of Liberalism must be the improvement of the condition of the masses; and it is for this reason we deem its success of such urgent importance. But to see that this is the case, notwithstanding the latent Conservatism of a vast portion of the Liberal party, requires more intelligence and education than we can fairly ascribe to the ordinary run of working-men electors.

Assuming, then, that the political convictions of the new electors cannot be relied upon to teach them at once that the cause of Liberalism is identical with their own, we do not feel altogether sure that their support may not be enlisted on behalf of interests which are alien from, if not opposed to, their own. There is much in the principles of political economy professed by the Liberal school distasteful to the prejudices of the labouring class; there is, too, if we may be pardoned for so saying, a sort of Rowdyism in the True-Blue Tory profession of faith not likely to be without attraction for the class in question. And what is more than all, the process of log-rolling may be carried on as well on this side the Atlantic as the other. It is quite conceivable that a coalition may be formed at no very distant period between the Tory gentry on the one hand, and our mechanics on the other. We have seen in America how a political organisation, representing the wealth and station of the country, will support an Eight Hours Bill in order to secure the workmen's vote for their own candidates; and there would be nothing surprising in seeing the rights of Trades' Unions, or the duty of giving a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, supported by country squires and Conservative millionaires. This, or some such idea as this, must, we think, lie at the root of the confidence with which Mr. Disraeli has insisted on the enfranchisement of the artisan class in the boroughs.

Now, even supposing these prognostications should prove correct, we should not in the least regret the passing of Household Suffrage. In the long run, we believe any increase in the numerical numbers of voters must tend to advance the cause of Liberalism; and even if this were otherwise, we hold the vindication

of the right of the operative classes to the full privileges of citizenship a matter of far more importance than the temporary triumph of any political party. But notwithstanding this, the danger of the "residuum" being made use of to support the interests of Toryism is a very real one, and, as far as we can see, it can only be averted by the disappearance of the "residuum" as a class. Education is the one specific for purity of election; and the Liberals are bound to use their utmost efforts to establish a system of general education throughout the country, not only on account of national, but of party interests.

Moreover, there is, we think, a certain danger in the indeterminateness of the Liberal election addresses,—or perhaps we might say more justly, in the programme on which these addresses are founded. You may look through address after address, and you will find little else but variations on the one theme,—that the candidate is a staunch Liberal, an opponent of the Irish Church, and a supporter of Mr. Gladstone. Now this last saving clause may bear many different meanings. When the Tory peer, on being asked what he understood by Conservatism, said, "Voting with Lord Derby," his profession of faith was intelligible, if not logical. When, in 1865, Liberal candidates stated their intention of giving a warm support to Lord Palmerston, everybody knew exactly what they meant. But Mr. Gladstone is a statesman of far wider views, of a far more progressive character, than either of the above-named leaders. If anything can be predicted safely, it is that, if he becomes Premier, he will take decided views on many of the great questions of the day, and will endeavour to enforce those views in action. And we should be glad if the gentlemen who are so profuse in their general offers of supporting Mr. Gladstone had condescended from generalities to particulars. The disestablishment of the Irish Church is an excellent commencement for the work of a Liberal administrator, but it will not supply the place of all other reforms; and the country would like to know what the Liberals purpose doing when they enter office again. One of the candidates, who has recently offered himself to a southern constituency, sums up his pretensions in the statement that he is a "temperate, but sincere Liberal, who will do all in his power to oust the present Government." So far so good. No reform can be carried, no work done, till Mr. Disraeli and his colleagues are cleared out of the way. But when this is done,—and the enterprise is not likely to be an arduous one,—we should wish to know what this gentleman and the "temperate, but sincere Liberals," of whom he is a type, intend doing for us.

We know very well that this demand of ours may be criticised as premature. We may be told that you must do one thing at a time, and that, till the Government is replaced in Liberal hands, and the question of the Irish Church is settled, it would weaken the strength of the party

to pledge it to a general programme. As a mere question of parliamentary tactics, we have no doubt the objectors are in the right ; but we believe the importance of tactics in political as well as in military strategy may easily be overrated ; and we hold that the accession of strength gained by the issue of a programme which would rally popular enthusiasm to the support of the Liberals would more than counterbalance any injury resulting from a premature exposure of the plan of the parliamentary campaign. Unless we are mistaken, it will be found, in the long run, that the working-men electors, in as far as they take an interest in political issues, will care much more about measures than about men, and will be comparatively inaccessible to the party cries and personal considerations which of late years have had such influence with the old constituencies. It is most desirable, quite apart from any questions of party success, that the thinking and intelligent men, amidst the masses we have admitted to the franchise, should identify their cause with that of the Liberal party. At the elections now approaching we trust these men will do so from the simple fact that the Opposition is pledged to one distinct Liberal measure, which commends itself to the good sense of the artisan class. But, with this single exception, the prospectus of the Liberal party contains little beyond vague commonplaces ; and as far as addresses go, ordinary electors would find it hard to determine which of the rival candidates for his vote avoids most sedulously all allusions to the great issues of education, retrenchment, and administrative reform, which must inevitably be mooted in the next Parliament. With the elector nowadays the choice of a candidate, as far as any general programme is concerned, is still very much a "leap in the dark," and so long as this remains so we cannot hope for any manifestation of the popular enthusiasm required to return a Parliament which will support Mr. Gladstone as a matter of conviction, not as a matter of policy.

As far as the approaching elections are concerned we do not expect the vote of the "residuum" will exercise any very important influence. Neither party knows the exact electoral elements with which in future we shall have to deal, and till that knowledge is obtained the agencies through which electors are influenced are condemned to comparative inaction. The one thing upon which all parties appear to be agreed is, that the new election will be unusually and enormously expensive. This cost is partly owing to the uncertainty which attends all untried experiments ; partly to the fact that the question of the Irish Church and the fall of the ministry, though they have not excited much of popular passion, have roused the feelings of the classes who spend the most on electioneering matters. But the main reason for the expense of the approaching contest is the increased size of the constituencies ; and this reason is a permanent one. When the electors are numbered, as they will be henceforth in

many instances, by tens of thousands, a personal canvass is out of the question. It is difficult for the candidate even to bring himself before his constituents by public meetings. It follows, therefore, that the only way in which the electors can be got at is through the services of a number of local agents; and this system, as long as our elections are conducted on their present principle, is inevitably a most expensive one. Besides this, with the rapid increase of wealth throughout the country, the social distinction of a seat in Parliament is becoming daily more valued, and therefore a seat, like all articles in large demand and of limited supply, commands a very high price. Thus, just at the time when the mechanism of elections has been rendered more costly than ever, the competition for the honour of writing M.P. after one's name has become keener than before; and, in consequence, the access to Parliament is becoming more and more closed against men who either directly or indirectly have not the command of large means.

The result of all this is that the next House of Commons will contain a much larger proportion than usual of moneyed men. Whether this is a gain or not is a point we are not discussing now; we only wish to point out the fact. There is no indication whatever of that influx of needy adventurers which we were confidently told would be the fruit of an enlarged franchise; on the other hand, there is as little promise of that accession of new blood which was held out to us as one of the chief benefits of lowering the suffrage. The new Parliament will, in fact, be composed of similar materials to its predecessors; and though, as we have explained, we believe the practical policy of our representatives will be immensely influenced, whether for better or for worse, by the changed character of their constituencies, we have no doubt their normal tendencies will remain unaltered.

If, then, we are correct in our estimates, we should say that the following predictions may safely be made with reference to the Electoral Out-look. In the first place, the Liberals will have a very decided majority in the new Parliament; secondly, these Liberals will be pledged to support Mr. Gladstone in a very different manner from that in which they supported him last session; thirdly, the majority of the House will be united on behalf of a clear and definite programme, and will be compelled to adhere together so long as the question of the Irish Church remains undecided; and lastly, the House will be composed of men whose politics, whether ministerial or opposition, will eventually be tinged with the practical Conservatism inherent in the possession of wealth and station. These conditions are not, we think, uniformly favourable to the Liberal cause. Still they are vastly more favourable than any we have known of late years; and if Mr. Gladstone fulfils the expectation which those who know him best have formed of his genius, he will have a fair field for the exercise of his power of leadership.

At all events, the out-look is hopeful in one very important respect.

We have got nearly to the end of the Disraeli interregnum. Without joining in all the personal abuse that has been levelled at the Premier, we can state, without fear of serious contradiction, that the Disraelite régime has been a very mortifying one to all who valued the honour of the country and the dignity of parliamentary institutions. The spectacle of a ministry maintained in office by adroitness of tactics,—of a minority ruling because the majority could never summon up courage to assert its supremacy,—of a party sacrificing principle after principle, tradition after tradition, to retain power,—of a Prime Minister whose words carried no weight,—is one we have endured longer than we like to remember, and which, if it might be, we would forget gladly. If, after the next election, Mr. Disraeli should retain office, it must be as the leader of a clear majority, as the champion of distinct principles, not as a minister upon sufferance. And if, which is infinitely more probable, Mr. Disraeli should give place to Mr. Gladstone, the country will have exchanged a Prime Minister whose loyalty to principle is hardly asserted even by his friends, for one whose earnest sincerity is not disputed by his enemies. At all events, the present era of unworthy compromise must come to an end with the approaching appeal to the country; and for that, if for no other cause, we can look cheerfully towards the immediate future.

CRICKET.

DR. JOHNSON defines cricket as "a sport, at which the contenders drive a ball with sticks in opposition to each other." Whether this somewhat hazy description was an expression of ill-will, like that which he caused to explode upon fishing,—whether it was another specimen of the "interstitial vacuities reticulated or decussated," by which he disguised the simplicity of a net,—or whether it was "ignorance, madam,—sheer ignorance," does not matter much now. For the game at which Lord John Sackville and "Long Robin," good men of Kent, challenged all England and beat them; the game which was stigmatised by that stout old "Gentleman's Magazine" as levelling and mischievous, has become, at the end of a hundred and twenty years, that by which Englishmen may be recognised in every corner of the earth. Where a score or so of our sons are found, there is found cricket; where they are not, cricket is not; and the ethnologist may hereafter find a very sufficient guide to their presence by the inseparable concomitants of fossil stumps and bats.

Into the causes of this peculiar institution not merely failing to flourish, but steadfastly declining to take the smallest root, in soils unshadowed by the British flag or its successors, it is needless to enter here. Few of those who understand the game at all, and have any knowledge of national character, will fail to recognise, if they cannot define, the inaptitude of aught but the Saxon element for such a sport. At any rate, if the theory lacks precision, the fact is transparent enough. Far away north, our Russian colony at St. Petersburg fails to tempt the descendants of the Boyards to emulate us in the field: on the race-course they enter as participators; on the cricket-ground they will not step, even as spectators. Austria is, I believe, guiltless of the attempt. Germany may witness a few spasmodic efforts between "The World" and Public Schools, at Homburg or Wiesbaden. At Florence, Rome, or Naples, the unwonted spectacle of cricket-bags may startle the natives into momentary wonder at what the Forestieri are up to next. But it is the English alone who take part in the game; and, with the exception of a few misguided Frenchmen, who have been tormented by the superhuman energy of a certain secretary into supporting the game with their occasional appearance before, and hasty retreat from, a dangerous wicket, no progress has been made towards any international contest in this behalf. Even the Spaniard has got a love for horse-racing after the English fashion;

but neither Gibraltar nor Cadiz has seduced him, by Anglican example, to doff his sombrero for a club-cap; and the whole Continent of Europe may be safely pronounced to contain no real cricketer, save in these isles and their dependencies. America tells the same tale. In Canada the game flourishes. In the States of the Union, in which English blood is not much mixed, it maintains a precarious existence by the side of base-ball. Elsewhere, who ever heard of it? Our own dependencies in India cannot create native players; and although, by unremitting diligence,—more for the pleasure of overcoming difficulties than anything else,—one or two Englishmen have taught the Australian native to present a more than creditable appearance, their existence is a mere phenomenon which has no significance so far as the national character of the game is concerned.

Were it not for the special character which is here claimed, all this would be odd. Here have the French, to go no farther, copied other sports, which we have also carried to the end of the world, with almost ridiculous fidelity. At rowing they have managed to present a creditable front. Horse-racing they, like ourselves, are carrying to a reprehensible excess; the minutest details of an English race-course are reproduced, and, I may add, with improvements; the phrases familiar to us all reappear there in strange garb, such as “breack-down” and “gentlemans rider;” the very luncheon, pride of an English drag, is served up on the Marquis de T.’s coach-roof with lamb and mint sauce, sherry and “palale,” within reach of what one would have supposed more appetising delicacies from Potel’s. Yet on the selfsame day when this was going on at one end of the Bois de Boulogne in the afternoon, the secretary hereinbefore alluded to could not by smile, prayer, or menace, convene a dozen French people to the other end to partake in a match between Paris and the Marylebone Club itself, although duly set forth as the “premiers joueurs d’Angleterre.” No; they could shoot pigeons, after the fashion of Hornsey Wood before its destruction, within earshot of the Lac at mid-day; they could go down with English grooms and English horses to the races in the afternoon; but your crickets, no. Tennis, some might urge as an exception to the rule I am about to lay down; it is not so really, and very, very few Frenchmen care even about that; but it may be safely affirmed that a game by which you get no money, which involves, nevertheless, much muscular exertion, and, above all, in which you may get very considerably hurt, has nothing to recommend itself to any one but an Englishman. Let us keep it so, and enjoy it by ourselves.

Of course every sport has its advocates. I read a good deal, very well said, about the special merits of hunting, rowing, fishing, and shooting, which may be fairly said to sum up the out-door exercises of our day. Football has gained a little temporary position, but few busy men can really partake of its somewhat hazardous con-

flict. Coursing is a cross between hunting and shooting, and is, in fact, like racing to the multitude,—a thing which is to be looked at only; while archery and croquet may pair off together. Now the great merit of cricket is that it combines so many of the merits, and so few of the demerits, alleged to exist in the other sports. Shooting, for instance, is social only by accident: in theory, and too often in practice, it is eminently selfish. So in hunting,—the grandest excitement out,—you share the sport with others, but you grudge them that share. It is not because everybody else is enjoying himself that I feel the sacred fire of joy; I do not object that he should do so; but if I am first over the brook, or can pound the whole lot, and go on alone, the consciousness that their pleasure is over for the day lends no pang of remorse to my heart, but, on the contrary, increases my demoniac delight.

So far, then, as competition goes, the dearest triumph in this case, as also in shooting or fishing, is obtained by the ill-success of everybody except yourself; the enjoyment is not therefore a social one in the true sense. Rowing brings in the element of joint success at once; but it seems to me to do so in rather too forcible a way; while the oarsman becomes only part of a machine, which will reflect great honour and glory on others, but very little on himself. It takes a keen eye and a good judge to pick out number four's merits: and the better the rest row with him, and he with them, the less he can be singled out for praise. Here the enjoyment is social enough, but the soul of man must pine for a little individual honour and dignity, which, while not impairing the joint effect, shall send him home with more satisfaction than that of the off-leader in a team. It is in this that cricket, as I conceive, shines pre-eminent, hitting, as it does, the exact line between the duties of citizenship and the sweetness of *monstrari et dicier*, &c. No man is an Ishmael here. "We won," says the eleventh man, and "I made two catches, or got runs when they were wanted," as the case may be. In rowing, the last choice is, or ought to be, the worst; he is the blot of the eight; he spoils the lift of the whole boat; he never ought to have been in. He may row out his very inside, he may be utterly unworthy of one tithe of the abuse which falls to his share; but there he is, and he cannot redeem himself, or ever be more than "that man we were obliged to put in when Robinson smashed up." Contrast him with the corresponding *bête noir* in the eleven. The latter has every minute an opportunity of becoming famous; every minute of each day during the match he has a marshal's *bâton* in his pocket; and on him at any moment may the countless cheers of Lord's be concentrated, as having done the thing which saves or pulls off the match. If he makes a mistake, he has the others' merits to fall back upon; if he does a good thing, it is all his own, and he

has the additional pride of feeling that his fellow-cricketers reap the advantage; and therefore, I say, an eleven is better constructed for combining both sorts of competitive ecstasy, than is an eight-oar boat.

If, moreover, the cricketer can enjoy virtuous pleasures to a greater degree than his solitary rivals in the hunting field, or than the integral but consolidated crews on the river, he can hardly copy all their vices. He may be always riding jealous, he may be constantly trying to wipe other men's eyes, but he has this check, that there is a duty to others to be done. Riding over hounds, or disappointing other men at fences, are crimes against the code of gentlemen; shooting your friend's bird is as bad; but when you have avoided such sins, you may ride your horse to pieces in the first five minutes, or miss bird after bird, till you lie down and gnaw turnips with rage; you have only yourself to injure and to blame. The man at the wicket is differently placed, he has a side to uphold, and a ring to detect his shortcomings in so doing; and jealousy or ill-temper is best kept out of sight under such circumstances. It is very annoying to miss an easy leg-hit, but after a few explosions, a player subject to such supervision soon gets tired of whirling his bat about to show how he feels it. Very disheartening is it to see your field fail in catch after catch, but a bowler's benedictions are more usually deep than loud, after a good public education, such as his mates in the pavilion can and do give him. And the result is that, take it for all in all, specimens of submission to authority, and of self-sacrifice for common weal, may be seen every day in our great matches, which are earnest of ability to do the like in the sterner relations of life. A well-organised eleven out in the field, silent and obedient, is really a fine sight. Over after over, perhaps, the obstinate enemy retains his place at the wicket; the bowler keeps "pegging away;" the field relax no jot of vigilance; by the mere beckon of a finger from the wicket-keeper a piece of strategy is carried out, and one or more of the force are moved to command a supposed weak point. As the good ball is bowled, played well, and fielded deftly, an answer of applause comes from many hands all round the black line of spectators, and the several performers have their reward. For it is curious how very soon the public learn to be critics, and just ones. Every now and then they make mistakes in injudicious approbation, or undistinguishing blame, but, as a rule, the ring's verdicts are sound; and incompetence or buffoonery is soon detected and reprobated, while steady play, where brilliance would be wrong, is fully appreciated. At the public school matches indeed it is a point of honour to applaud everything, good, bad, or indifferent, done by your own side; but, on other great occasions, no more discriminating audience than that at Lord's ever sat in the most fastidious opera house of Europe.

A striking instance of this true cricket feeling which animates the habitual frequenters of great matches was afforded us the other day

at Lord's. With any other clientèle, the combined attractions of a lovely day, a band playing, and twenty-two noble lords and honourable commoners engaged in strife with such men as I Zingari, would have drawn thousands from mere curiosity. How would the O'Donoghue field, I should myself have believed to be a question interesting of solution. But it was thought not to be real cricket, and such an entire absence of humanity has not been seen on the forms round the ring this year. As it happened, Parliament distinguished itself so much more up in St. John's Wood than it has of late at St. Stephen's Hall, and showed the blessings of good government and good temper in such an engaging light, that I hope, at any rate, one eminent statesman was there to take a lesson, and to see what a really good lot of fellows he had to sit among. But the general public set their face against aught but stern cricket, and stopped away accordingly.

It is amusing to see how the characteristics of different men show themselves in such an arena, and how opportunity is given for the exhibition of that which in ordinary life stands concealed. For instance, it has often been observed that a very conceited man, who seems to be shamelessly bumptious, is really the most nervous of creatures. At cricket this is detected to a certainty. More than alive to his own merits, fearful to a degree that something will happen to mar their due exposition, the brazen youth advances with his bat behind his back, under his arms,—a favourite attitude of this class,—or swinging it jauntily along as if he cared for nothing. Vain boasting! If you wish to see a real funkier, look at him when the dreaded moment arrives, and Wootton prepares to put down one of his best. He must still feign calmness, or he is nothing; but you see by the twitch of the hand, the glove rapidly raised to the face, and replaced on the bat-handle, the jerk of the elbow, and perhaps the uneasy lifting of the foot, that his fear of a "duck,"—as by a pardonable contraction from duck-egg, a nought is called in cricket-play,—outweighs all other earthly considerations. He escapes, the uplifted hands of the bowler proclaim how narrowly: therewith his spirits rise, and he walks round the wicket to show his muscle. The process repeated once or twice, he takes heart, conceit assumes her sway: he tries to hit a straight one to leg, and falls, returning to the pavilion with a full and complete explanation, inch by inch, of the extraordinary conduct on the part of the ball which led to the result.

There is one qualification which ought to be made with regard to the universality of cricket among us. The proposition is true only if applied to the ideal Englishman, the member of the upper and middle classes, who comes up to our large towns, or emigrates to our colonies, and who is looked at apart from local origin. When we get to considering England on the map, and divide it into counties or districts, the rule no longer holds good. Move your English labourer,

and he becomes a cricketer naturally, like others. While at home in the country village, he is governed by the habits of those immediately around him. Some counties have never done anything in the national game, so far as the working man is concerned; in others, it is his delight and almost single pastime. Hampshire was the earliest in the field; and although her cricketing powers have waned, they have never wholly failed. For the last thirty years, however, Kent, Sussex, and Surrey, in the south, have been conspicuous for village greens studded with evening practisers, and for matches, in which superior form is shown by mere labourers. Cambridge and Norfolk, in a less degree, maintain this position in the eastern counties; and then come Nottingham, Yorkshire, and, of late, Lancashire, in the north. The last-named county has improved wonderfully in the last few years, and the game may be fairly considered as safe to exist there for many a year to come. Sheffield has been the great fountain-head from which Yorkshire cricket has found its way into the three Ridings. But Nottingham has, from time whereof cricket memory runneth not to the contrary, stood firmly at the head of northern practice. And it is curious to note how style, as in the public schools, is perpetuated there to this day from early years in the century. Free hitting, more particularly to leg, has been a characteristic of their eleven ever since the oldest memory. Sometimes they have had bad bowling, more often, as just at the present moment, almost a superabundance of good; but no one has ever seen them come up without lots of hitting. Indeed, one particular branch of this speciality is indigenous. The old hands used to follow the ball when it was capable of being played to "leg," and with a laudable indifference to the laws of mathematics, believed that if hit in the same direction as it was already travelling, the ball went farther. It was at Nottingham that this was discovered to be a mistake, and that the true way is that now invariably inculcated, of getting forward to the pitch, and leaving the conflict of forces to direct the ball more or less square to the hitter. The value of the discovery is proved by the scores made, for it would not be too much to say that one-third of the hard hits are effected by this method alone. It is in the nature of things that batting should improve just as execution on the piano or violin does. Passages which our fathers were scared at are now played easily by every public performer; and in the same way boys now play balls by rote, as it were, which would have puzzled an early English professor to death. Constant practice, with a good eye and ready decision, will soon make an average man into a fair batsman. Bowling is more like poetry, and cannot be so manufactured; and a bowler must be created with natural advantages if he is ever to shine. When found, he is like a *tenore robusto*,—a priceless treasure. Some few years ago one of the counties named above had an apparently inexhaustible

supply. Now, they have not one. On the other hand, Nottingham, then weak, has at least half-a-dozen now in the very first rank.

The remaining counties may be divided into those who have some native cricket, and those which have none. Of the former, Leicestershire would doubtless stand well from her neighbourhood to Nottingham, were it not for a lamentable absence of grounds in her villages. Herefordshire, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, I believe, can do something; but for the rest there is little sympathy with the game,—and as for the Principality, a Welsh cricketer is as scarce an article as a Welsh cricket-ground. Probably the Welsh are too much employed in providing flannel for more enlightened districts.

A hundred and fifty years ago, our fathers played in the Artillery Ground, Finsbury Square. Then Londoners came to White Conduit Fields, and the “noblemen and gentlemen” made laws at the “Star and Garter,” in Pall Mall, scene of the Chaworth tragedy, in which Lord Byron’s predecessor in the title got off so easily. From this by lineal descent came the present Lord’s; the pedigree being first Dorset Square, then the site of the Regent’s Canal, between South and North Banks, and lastly, let us hope and believe, a final resting-place hard by the Clergy Orphans. Private liberality advanced the money necessary to acquire the ground so as to avoid future pilgrimages; and now, after many vicissitudes, the M.C.C. can boast of managing their own matches on their own ground. The other great metropolitan place of sport is far more modern than most visitors believe. It is not yet thirty years old, but in that short time it has fixed itself firmly, among a certain class more firmly, than ever the more exclusive club in the North-West has been able to do. There may be fewer carriages, and fewer ladies,—but a great day at the Oval will show more citizens, and witness more chaff, than the most crowded performance at its rival. They may drink less cider-cup; but then have they not ‘Atfield, as the pleasant compound of gin, noyeau, gingerbeer, and ice, is joyfully called? and with or without the initial aspirate, an excellent drink it is. Possibly the growing outrecuidance of the professionals may have at one time received a little more encouragement on the Surrey side than it ought, but the Committee seem to have seen the error of their ways in this respect. In all others they have done much for the cause of cricket, and although not law-givers, they have always set an example to law-abiders.

In the country, days gone by tell of Broad Halfpenny and the Hambledon Club, and these, with the grounds of Lord Tankerville, the Duke of Dorset, and Sir Horace Mann, formed the playing-grounds of the inventors of cricket as it is. Since then cricket at Canterbury and Nottingham, Oxford and Cambridge, has flourished on the same grounds till the present day, although at the latter university the ground has been changed from the public common to

an enclosed field hard by. Brighton has been driven from house and home more than once, and Sheffield also; both, however, finding pastures new. The Leicester ground, upon which many a grand match has been played, and as many runs got as on any, is now a series of streets of the conventional pattern of red brick houses with chimneys at each end. All honour to the Committee at Lord's for rescuing the old place from similar profanation.

It is not, however, to the old idea of a club with its local habitation, whence it sallied forth to do battle with the stranger, and to which it expected the stranger to come in his turn—not to the great county grounds with their home and return matches—that the present increase of cricket is due. It is no doubt true that in days gone by the idea of a club without a ground was an impossible one; but within the present generation of cricketers a new order of things arose. Subscriptions for keeping the turf in good order, for engaging professional players to the end of practice, and for defraying expenses of transit on the annual outings, were generally found to hamper the progress of cricket. Many a man was willing to play who had no ground near him; many another who could ill afford to subscribe to the numerous clubs anxious to avail themselves of his prowess; and all were inclined, if possible, to emancipate themselves from the trammels and expenditure which the employment of professionals involved. The founders of the far-famed Zingari saw this, and inaugurated a new phase of the game which bids fair to become of dimensions enough to swallow, or at least unduly interfere with, the older and more legitimate form of contest. They started the heresy of a purely amateur body, with no ground, and no professional assistance, to which the subscription should be nothing, and the entrance never to exceed the subscription, and which should play at the individual expense of each man wherever and whenever they could light upon ground fit to receive them, and entertainment for man and bat should be offered. The early advantages were great. The founders improved gentlemen's bowling,—always the weak point, and which few had the courage and determination to practise; they created a strong esprit de corps in the limited body of members, and they took good cricket into places where county contests were impossible. It seems strange that men should have waited so long for such a simple enlargement of a possible field of action; but when the egg had been once set on end the Zingari were not long in finding imitators. Cambridge set up her Quidnunes, Oxford followed with her Harlequins; and now a countless body of cricketers, with nearly every name, reasonable or absurd, by which such a fellowship can be indicated, flood the columns of our newspapers. To say the truth, these imitators are but a *servum pecus* as to originality. The Zingari indicated their principle of action clearly enough, and were therefore for some time annoyed by absurd plagiarisms of their defining name and style. This wore

off after a space, and some attempt at originality was made. The army had their Knickerbockers, Rugby her Butterflies, Eton her Wanderers, Harrow, I think, her Blues. These were perennial. The Incogniti, the Etceteras, κ. τ. λ. &c., the Perambulators, the Cricket Company, are also all alive; of the Peripatetics and several like-named institutions, we do not hear much now; and many having been founded with no original bond of union, and for no imaginable reason except to have a name and a ribbon, perish almost in the first year of their existence. Their number becomes almost a nuisance; but it is at any rate a distinct testimony to the soundness of the original idea, and makes the reminiscence of a time when no such combination was dreamed of almost incredible. For after all there ought to be a moving, inspiring idea in the formation in every club of this sort. It is no use endeavouring to get up fictitious sympathy with what are technically termed sides. I can't do it, nor can you. Married and Single, Tall and Short, Old and Young, are only so many variations of the first half of the alphabet against the second; and, for utter lack of interest, commend me to an "A to K." Such a division makes a good practice game, and is better than none; but it never can be more than a side. Bring a lot of hardy Norsemen to fight inch by inch with the South, and you see a real contest, and take your side; better still, if you set county against county, and watch the patriotism which an artificial division can never evoke; or set school against school, university against university; and in days which seem never likely to return,—the Gentlemen against the Players. Party feeling is after all the true mainspring of life, and party success the pleasure above all others; if you cannot contribute, you can at least share it. The English are accused of reducing all things to pounds, shillings, and pence; the money-boxes at Lord's or the Oval know well by this standard the difference between the anxious crowds who watch one sort of match, and the listless indifference of the few loungers who drop in at the other.

And this brings me to the monster cricket nuisance of the day. It is bad enough to see a parcel of ninnies airing a flaming ribbon and a sonorous name in the newspapers, and duly paying for the insertion. It annoys one, but it does no real harm. It pleases them, and don't hurt the game. But it is far otherwise with the so-called England Elevens, which go caravanning about the country playing against two bowlers and twenty duffers for the benefit of some enterprising publican. If it were only for the bad cricket on the side of the twenty-two, the thing would be intolerable enough. Imagine a whole district scoured for miles for anything in the shape of a player, and the strange ill-matched result in the shape of twenty-four beggars treading on each other's toes with bran-new spikes, missing catch after catch, and eventually going in one after the other, like sheep to the slaughter, to "ave their hover of Jackson," as "Punch" put it, and you have a

fair average of the locals. What good it does them to have a round 0 duly affixed to their names in the county paper, and to pay in purse and person for the privilege, is hard to conceive. But it is their own business. The real evil is that done to their hired antagonists, and to the game which they at any rate are competent to adorn. There are, perhaps, some thirty or forty men who would, before the name had become a byword, have been honoured by being called "England" players. In time past the mass of these men stuck to their counties, while a few of the best were hired by the great metropolitan clubs as bowlers, and released when claimed by their county. They were proud of being asked to play; they came up to Lord's and earned their five pounds for winning a match. They were civil and contented. In an evil hour for cricket, old Clark of Nottingham, a shrewd man, and one who saw where money was to be got, conceived the idea of propagating cricket in distant parts. In the exercise of his quasi-episcopal functions, he took to himself a dozen other missionaries, and before and after the regular cricket season transported them to any place ready to pay for their services. But then it was only before and after the regular season that this was done, except when a blank week offered itself. There can be no question that, for the time, a great deal of good was done. Many a man who had imbibed the rudiments already learnt to play better. Many more were stimulated to begin, who had never dreamed of cricket before. Clubs were formed, and all went well for the true interests of the game. The mine, however, was soon discovered to be rich enough to tempt fresh adventurers, and a second eleven was formed in opposition. Both sets, too, began to look upon the casual engagement in a great match, or the more permanent employment at so much a week, as a thing not to be compared in point of profit with the new method; and, moreover, the vanity of the professionals was tickled. They found themselves rated higher in the rural districts, more petted and praised, than was possible at a good honest inning or a fair day's bowling at Lord's; and by degrees the two duties began to clash. Fresh rivals, too, sprung up. The Eleven and The United Eleven found themselves met by new if less influential bands, and a competition arose which was not other than acrimonious. Unluckily, just at this time Australia and America seemed fair fields for earning fresh honours and fresh money. A rivalry as to who should share in the new venture was originated; animosity was engendered; and from the effect of this rivalry metropolitan cricket has not yet recovered. Whether it will ever do so is still a moot point. Nearly the whole available talent has been withdrawn. Men of one faction refused to meet men of the other in the field; and paid professionals insisted on dictating to those who paid them the associates with whom alone they would consent to act. The result has been to destroy one match of the greatest interest, for it is absurd to consider the matches between

Gentlemen and Players for the last two or three years as worthy of the name; and it would be an easy task to pick at least two elevens able to defeat that which contended under the name of the Players of England in the matches of the other day. What was still worse, this absurd jealousy for a time precluded some of the county matches altogether; and it is only in the present year that Nottingham has condescended again to enter the lists against her old antagonist, Surrey. At Lord's, the Marylebone Club, unable to endure the dictation of their own servants, are compelled to lose the services of men who have on that ground won all the honours on the prestige of which they now trade; and it is certainly well for the true interests of cricket that the committee persevere in refusing to give way. The struggle will be long, but, I fancy, none the less certain in its result. When those who have carried a reputation earned in London to the provinces have passed away,—and a career like that of a travelling cricketer is not a long one,—their place cannot be filled. No calico will be needed to conceal gaps in the hedge at Fuddleton-cum-Pipes, and to repress the undue attention of non-paying spectators, when all that can be offered to the rustic gaze is a worn-out Lord's man or two, backed by eight or nine youths who have never won their spurs. To London they must come before they can earn a livelihood at starring, and it will be the fault of the managers of our great clubs if they again find their engaged players deserting them in the middle of a season for the flesh-pots of Twenty-twos. But, in the meantime, much mischief will be done; the new hands will lose the chance of forming themselves on the style of the old, and many a day will probably go by before such cricket can be seen again as but a very few years ago might be seen any Monday at Lord's or any Thursday at the Oval. The evil of schism is bad, but I think that even worse remains behind. It must be that the style of play in the next generation will be materially injured by the habits induced. To play carefully against twenty-two fielders cramps the hitter; to play carelessly against the two poor slaves of bowlers who are engaged match after match to assist, and indeed supplant, rustic incompetence, must be still more injurious; while the effect on the professionals' own bowling and fielding, with nights spent in the train, and with days passed in hammering against a side positively annoying from its incapacity, may very well be conceived. I once saw a rural authority in one of these abominations hold his bat stiff and stark for three mortal hours against the best bowling England could then produce. He made four runs, or rather the ball did for him, in that time. Fancy a man like Hillyer having to bowl against forty-four such people every week! No wonder that bowling is not so straight, and not so killing,—no wonder that innings increase to figures which our forefathers would discredit.

This brings me to ask, Do people play better than they did? I

think an impartial looker-on would say that they hit loose bowling better, and then he would have nearly epitomised the truth. Hitting, like playing the violin, as I said in another page, is a matter of education, depending upon your tools and your experience. When a man had a hook to bat with, he was compelled to hook every ball to the side which nature points out. When he got the present bat to deal with, and three stumps to guard, he naturally learnt to keep his weapon straighter, and to hit in that position also,—in fact, to drive; his offensive tactics were governed by his defensive necessities. Individuals grow wiser, and so do nations; and the cut, the old leg-hit, the draw, the new form of leg-hit, and finally what they call, in cricket phraseology, the “Cambridge poke,” supplemented the original drive. As the bowling was not so straight as the old underhand, the power of making fresh hits supervened. And I think it would be wrong to deny that more balls are hit in more different places and different methods than was the case years ago. It is natural, and it is so, as far as we can learn from past heroes. But whether the game is played throughout as scientifically, whether bowlers are better,—they are certainly not so straight,—and fielders more careful, is a very different question, and would receive a different answer. Cobbett and Lillywhite, and in later days Hillyer and Wisden, were most assuredly better on the wicket than the same class of bowler is now; and, so far as brilliancy is concerned, I doubt, if Nottingham were polled, whether they would declare Wootton to be the equal of his predecessor, Redgate. The last-named man was, indeed, more like the present school of bowlers than any of the others mentioned above; but, in his day, I should think he was fully equal to any now at work. And it should be remembered that it had not then been found necessary to remove the restrictions on bowling which then fettered his arm. It may be that the new school of batters would have played down the above quartett as easily as they do some of the straighter men of the present day; but it seems, to one who has seen both epochs, that the older men found “devil” lacking in one lot of bowlers now-a-days, and had the precision and uniformity which is certainly not now a characteristic of the other school. You hear often now of “So-and-so’s day.” Cobbett never had a “day:” the evening and the morning were the same.

Still, to recur to the hitting, it must be acknowledged that the rising stars of the present day are more numerously brilliant. And it is with pride that the young men can tell their “*temporis acti*” friend to look at Buller and Lubbock as they are, at Mitchell as he was and may be again, and to mark how they get runs safely and easily off good balls, and how all round they hit. Our fathers admired Pileh, and referred all other batting to his standard: it may be presumption, but I suspect our young friends would be right in saying that off the same number of balls either of the two first-named would

get half as many runs again as that renowned ancient, and that without causing a pang to the most rigid precisian.

So far, then, let us rejoice in progress, and admit it is not altogether the badness of the bowling which has improved the hitting. If representative men are wanted of the two styles, one would give Pilch for the one, George Parr for the other; and those of the old school who might hesitate to put Kentfield behind Roberts at billiards would, I fancy, be nevertheless ready, taking them upon all sorts of ground and against all sorts of bowling, to give the palm to the younger man in cricket.

Before 1800 there may be said to have been two periods of cricket;—one antediluvian,—cricket in a state of nature, when everybody hooked balls to the one side with a thing like a packing-needle, in wood, and the ball might or might not run through the middle of a sort of gallows without getting the man out. When the wicket-keeper had to put the ball with his fingers into a hole, and the batsman might knock such fingers about as much as he liked. No Boxes or Lockyers then! After this came a great Star-and-Garter meeting in 1776, when, by adding a third stump, they made the game something like what it is now. Just before the present century began, the stumps were again raised, and so remained for many years, three inches lower, and one inch narrower, than at present.

Now that the Gentlemen and Players have lost their spell, and the North comes no more to fight the South, the two most interesting matches of the year are Oxford against Cambridge, and Eton against Harrow. We have one school-match left, and volumes might be written upon it, even shorn as it is of older glory. Why twelve thousand people come at all; why, when they do come, they all shout; why, if a ball is within a yard of the wicket, everybody bawls "bowled;" and why the batter, who hits round in empty space, and nearly knocks his stumps and the hostile wicket-keeper over in one fell blow, is always declared, by an elliptical form of expression, to have "played;"—these and many other matters, such as why people who never were at any school at all wear the supposed winning colour, are too wonderful to be found out. Not so difficult is it to see why Harrow beats Eton. They have no river, it is said sometimes; but that is, as all who know what a school eleven is, beside the question. There are quite as many good fish out of the river as in it. The real reason is shown as soon as the first ball is bowled; when the Eton boy, whether he be at the wicket with his bat, or out in the field with nothing but his good right and left hands to take care of him, stares startled at the bounce and hop. A dead flat,—dead in more senses than one,—does not prepare the young idea for Lord's, as does the side-long hill, lively enough itself, at Harrow. In the palmy days when Eton had fine elevens, she was much better than Harrow, and won accordingly. But when pretty evenly

matched, it seems that Harrow wins here; and as the ground has certainly not been better since 1850 than it was before, the score against Eton has told its tale. Many say it is always six to four against Eton at Lord's; and I really believe it is.

The literature of cricket is boundless. It fills half the sporting papers, and a good deal of the others. It may be rather monotonous, and, unless it be a very ready writer who holds the pen, it is necessarily so. There was once, I remember, an excellent reporter, whose evident pride it was to use a different word for every victory in the wrestling-rings of Cumberland. When as many as forty or fifty falls were tried, it was hard work; but he was quite equal to the occasion, and Rabelais, himself, could not have been more fertile in varied epithets. Such powers, however, are given to but few; and our cricket reporters are doomed to a bead-roll of pretty cuts and magnificent drives. Still their reports are carefully studied. Every line has its earnest and conscientious reader; and when the final match of the year comes, greedy minds give themselves up to that most astoundingly recondite lore, the "Averages." Marvellous is the compiler; more marvellous the reader. There is one class of cricketers, indeed, who live but for this. They have been most unwholesomely stimulated by the prominence given, and do and think nothing but how to increase their figure. They will go down to obscure places, and obtrude themselves upon unwilling colleagues, whereby to do so; and they afford during the season unmixed amusement by the pertinacity of their efforts. Their sole aim is to get stuck at the end of their name some cabalistic figure, like this, 23—39, an ingenious device for avoiding fractions; and to add a number of asterisks, denoting "number of times not out."

The Lord Rector of Aberdeen lately thought fit to say, upon a recent occasion, that "athletics assumed the dimensions of a national calamity." It is from no personal experience of his own, we may feel sure, but at the same time, as an old Balliol man, he might remember that the most honoured names in the cricket-field, as well as on the river, sprung from the college which has long stood first in literary power at Oxford. I venture to give him one parting bit of advice to substitute for some portion of the metaphysical curriculum of the university which has placed him for a time at its head,—a mere modicum of cricket. It may teach his alumni one or two things they do not apparently learn at present, and it will, at any rate, contribute there, as it does here, to manliness, self-dominion, and modesty.

A STRUGGLE FOR MASTERY.

I.

"**FAITES vos jeux, Messieurs.**" The invitation, familiar to most of us, in the dry, metallic voice of the croupier, was uttered for the hundredth time that night in the crowded gambling-room at Homburg.

A pretty woman of forty, dressed in the height and depth of the last Paris fashion,—an excellent counterfeit of a Parisian altogether, even to her very accent,—leant forward from the second rank of spectators in which she stood, and threw, with her tightly-gloved little-hand, a napoleon on the table. The number on to which it rolled was as yet uncovered. The next minute, however, a young man with long flaxen moustaches, on the opposite side of the table, stretched an arm over the heads of an old Russian Countess and a distinguished ornament of the *demi-monde*, who were seated before him, and placed a napoleon on this same number. This occurred three times: each time the luck was in favour of these two, and against nearly every other player at the table. Had they been professed gamblers they would not have insulted the goddess who smiled on them by removing the gold each time, and continuing to stake their pitiful twenty francs. But the lady had never seen a roulette-table before: it was her first visit to Homburg. This evening, being wet, she was induced to enter the hot, crowded rooms, and, for want of something to do, threw down her money,—that was all. The first time she won, she smiled and raked up the gold pieces carelessly. The second time she looked at the young man opposite, her companion in good luck. The third time she turned and whispered something into the ear of a tall and beautiful girl behind her. She was unlike an English girl, and, except in the matter of her clothes, unlike a French girl too; with a marvellous complexion, and a strange independence of manner; listless, with sad brown eyes, and a weary little mouth, that looked as if it were sick of waiting for an interest in life that would not come. She scarcely looked at the table, or heeded whether her companion lost or won. But twice, after that whisper, she glanced between an avenue of bonnets and bald heads at the young gambler opposite. And each time her eyes met his.

An old officer, a sort of military Friar Tuck, with a twinkling eye, tapped him on the shoulder.

"**Potz-tausend! Lieber Waldstein!** You gambling? Why, what

would the gracious lady-mother say? You are the last man I ever expected to find at the tables!"

He laughed and coloured. "I have been here a month: my 'cure' is over, and I leave to-morrow. I have never staked a single thaler till to-night. Do you see that lady opposite?—the one in a white bonnet?"

"I should think so; and the handsome daughter. I have been asking who they were. Friends of yours? Have a care, Waldstein! The gracious lady-mother will not hear of your casting an eye on any one but Clara, and if she learns——"

"Nonsense! Why, I don't even know who the girl is! Never saw her till to-night; but I've scarcely taken my eyes off her since I came into the room. She is positively divine. Why are none of our German girls ever like that? What countrywoman is she, I wonder? You see the devil tempted me to come to the table, just by way of having an excuse for standing opposite her. I had one napoleon in my pocket, and now,—look here! I'll hand it all over to you if you'll find out for me who they are, General."

"And how about my poor Clara?" said the General, with a mock sigh, and a real chuckle. "It is too bad. What would the gracious ——" But here some one came between them. The General moved on, and the rest of his sentence was lost. The lady opposite, meantime, emboldened by success, had left her winnings on the table several times running, and still her luck did not desert her. Waldstein, with whom it was now a point of honour to stake as much as his unknown companion in good fortune, found himself, at the end of ten minutes, with a large pile of gold before him. The demi-monde looked up with a bland smile, and moved her chair a little to make room for him and his money. Indeed, the attention of most people round the table was directed to the extraordinary run of luck which, with scarcely a check, had been attending these two persons now for nearly half-an-hour. People began to pile their money on whatever numbers the lady backed, for she always took the initiative. And then, on a sudden, the goddess turned away her face, and smiled on them no more. The lady bore her reverses lightly; her embroidered portemonnaie seemed inexhaustible: but when she saw the young man throw down his last napoleon, and put his hands into his pockets with an air which said plainly, "I have no more, and must e'en be content now to watch you," she drew back, and the great wave of beards and bonnets round the table closed over her.

A servant with cloaks stood at the garden-entrance of the Kur-Saal.

"It's quite an adventure," laughed the elder lady, as they walked home: "Such persistence on the young man's part! I wonder who he is?"

"I wish you wouldn't play again, mamma. I don't like it, with all those people staring at one. I felt ashamed to see that man opposite

putting down his money just wherever you did, and looking at you with a smile whenever you won. It was very impertinent, I think. I hate this place. I wish we were going away. Why do you stay here?"

"Because——never mind why, my precious child. We are only just come, and having taken our apartment for a month, here we must stay."

They entered one of the large, white, green-verandahed houses on the Untere Promenade. And they did not observe a figure which had followed them at a cautious distance, on the opposite side of the road, and which now stopped under the shadow of a tree. A few minutes later Rudolph von Waldstein was examining the strangers' list in the reading-room:—

Bei Herrn Strauss. Untere Promenade.

Frau Fürstin Galitzin m. Gesellschafterin u. Gefolge, a. Russland.

Herr Fuchs u. Gattin, a. Berlin.

Herr Graf von Furstenberg m. Gemahlin u. Fam, a. Siegen.

Zwei Fräulein Le Gros, a. Brüssel.

Mrs. Willington, nebst Fl. tochter u. Drsch., a. New York, America.

Herr General Poplaws-Culloche, a. Schottland.

Frau Generalin Poplaws-Culloche, Fam. u. Beg.

The young man was puzzled. Which of these names was most likely to fit the individuals who engrossed his thoughts at this moment? Could it be the Russian princess and her companion? The two Misses Le Gros from Brussels? The wife and daughter of that Scotch general with a wonderful name,—which he owed to the compositor? They were not Germans, he felt very sure; so that he put Fuchs and Furstenberg aside. Of the other lodgers there remained the lady and her daughter from New York. Which of all these was it? General von Hanecke, who had been looking through all the rooms for the young man, entered opportunely.

"Good; here you are. And now, where is your pile of napoleons? The ladies lodge 'bei Strauss'——"

"I know it."

"They are mother and daughter. They arrived the day before yesterday from Paris. Their name is——"

"Willington, aus New York, America," struck in Waldstein, promptly. "Just so. You see I have been beforehand with you."

"All guess-work," said the General, shaking his head contemptuously, and pointing to the Fremden-List. "At all events, you have not effected an introduction, and I am promised one on the Promenade to-morrow morning. What is more, I could present you, only I feel it would be treachery to that niece of mine,—the good Clara, whom you are to marry."

"Don't talk like that, General, even in joke. You know very well what I told my mother. I have the highest regard for Fräulein Clara, but—— In short, I suppose I'm not a marrying man. As to this, you are quite safe, as I leave Homburg to-morrow."

"The gracious lady-mother calls you back? My dear young friend, it is time you loosened the apron-strings a little."

"Loosened the apron-strings? What do you mean? You know I do just as I please. I hate this sort of life for long. I like nothing but the country; and so, fortunately, does my mother."

"You may say that,—hasn't left the Schloss for the last twenty years, I suppose, eh? Well, you will end by marrying Clara,—see if you don't. A good girl,—pity she's so plain,—with a good dowry. She's the very thing for you; and the gracious——"

"I tell you I'm not going to marry at all. But about this introduction. I should just like to speak to the girl, if you really will introduce me. I needn't go till the afternoon train."

Of course he didn't go; and it was thus that Margaret Willington and he became acquainted. Instead of going that day, he stayed on some weeks,—as long as Mrs. Willington did,—at Homburg; and Margaret now saw the place in quite different colours. When the end of the month drew near, she was nothing loth to linger on by the week, as her mother decided on doing. For Mrs. Willington felt more than hopeful now; she felt very certain that her primary object in coming to Homburg,—in coming to Europe at all, indeed,—was near its accomplishment. She had spared no pains in learning all that was to be learnt about Rudolph von Waldstein, and all her information had been satisfactory. Counts were as thick as blackberries; but this one was of very old family, possessing large estates on the borders of Switzerland and Germany,—a fine château, a princely fortune. He was young, good-looking, had been most strictly brought up by the mother whose only son he was, and was a model of every virtue under the sun. The combination might have seemed an impossible one to a cynic; but Mrs. Willington was not cynical. It is possible she would have submitted to have a few of the virtues docked off, provided the more substantial advantages which the young Graf possessed, had remained. Rank, wealth, fashion; these were the gods Mrs. Willington adored. She had a tolerable fortune, but she had been recklessly extravagant ever since her arrival, the preceding autumn, in Europe. A season in Paris had procured for her and her daughter many social triumphs: invitations from royalty, the homage paid to Miss Willington's beauty from a crowd of foreigners; princes and dukes, not to speak of lesser fry. But of solid, practical gain, there was none. It was very essential to Mrs. Willington's purse and purpose that her daughter should marry,—marry, that is to say, according to her views; and Margaret had not had a single "good" proposal.

She had, indeed, refused an old French banker, whom her mother had given her the option of marrying or not, as she felt inclined; but this was before Mrs. Willington had seen much of great Parisian society: her ideas expanded after that, and she felt that the banker was not to be regretted. No; a title, and an old title,—not a Brummagem one,—this was now essential to her happiness. And, like a ripe peach from the wall, without a single flaw to disqualify him for the honour of being devoured, so to speak, lo! Rudolph von Waldstein dropped into her ready grasp.

I feel that the description of such a mother, such antecedents, does not prepare one to sympathise much with the daughter; and, unfortunately, the attachment between mother and daughter was very strong. Mrs. Willington's influence over Margaret was unbounded. Had the latter been a less blindly-devoted and obedient daughter, she would have been a better and a happier woman. Her tender heart, her warm, clinging, pliable nature were very different from her mother's; but a number of the same foolish ideas, whose widespread branches, so to speak, overshadowed the mother's mind, had naturally shed their seed and taken root in the mind of the daughter too. The belief that the pursuit of pleasure is the main end of life had been religiously instilled into her, and vanity had been so sedulously ministered to, that it was impossible but that these should produce some fruits. That life of "unrest, which men miscall delight," afforded her little pleasure; yet she could hardly conceive of any other. Margaret had a capacity for loving strongly, and her mother was as yet the only thing she had had to love. If she now fell into wise hands, and were removed from that mother's influence, it was not too late for the evils of her early training to be counteracted. But like a delicate creeper, clasped with the growth of years around a trellis, if she was now to be transplanted, and ever to grow firmly against another wall, it was above all things necessary to unwind her tendrils from their original support.

Six weeks after Waldstein's introduction to Margaret, this is what he wrote to his mother:—

.... "You wonder at my long silence, best of mothers? You reproach me tacitly with my short letters, I know. I have taken up my pen daily to write to you; but the truth is, I could not write upon indifferent matters, and it was impossible to me to enter fully upon the one subject which has been occupying all my thoughts. I can do so now, however, for my mind is definitively at rest. I have taken the most important step man can take in life; and as I am confident that this step is for my own happiness, I hope very earnestly that it may meet with your approval. I am well aware that you would have wished to see and to sanction the choice of any one whom I entertained the thought of making my wife; but as this

was impossible, and as I felt very certain of your cordial approbation, when you see and know my darling Margaret, I thought it better to spare you any anxiety on the subject until my fate was happily fixed. I am, indeed, a lucky man to have secured a pearl of so great price, my mother. She is the sweetest, the most angelic of creatures; and, believe me, her beauty is the least of her attractions. She is American, and with her mother, Mrs. Willington, has only been in Europe a few months. Mr. Willington was a gentleman in business in New York, I understand, and left his widow a competence. My Margaret has no fortune; and if that be a drawback in your eyes, my dear mother, I am sure it is the only one you will be able to find. For myself, I consider my fortune enough for all my wants, and I have never desired that my wife should have money. A far more essential particular is, that she is a Protestant,—that faith in which you have brought me up, and which you hold so dear.

“Mrs. Willington leaves this for Paris in the course of a few days. I shall then come home for a short time, to see you and talk matters over, and make some necessary preparations for my Margaret’s reception. The marriage will, I hope, take place in Paris in November. I am afraid it will be in vain to try and persuade you to leave home to attend it; but we shall at once come to you after the marriage, and settle down at Waldstein for the winter.

“Let me be assured at once, my dear and honoured mother, as to your sentiments on the point wherein all my happiness is vitally concerned. Believe me, it will be the object of my Margaret’s life, as it has ever been of mine, to study your wishes in all things; and her earnest desire is that you should continue to exercise that authority in the household for which your virtues and your experience so eminently befit you.

“Dearest mother, I embrace you with dutiful and loving veneration.

“RUDOLPH VON WALDSTEIN.”

The weakness of the man was, I think, very apparent in the above letter,—the weakness that shrinks from discussion or remonstrance beforehand, and takes refuge in a bold assertion of independence, when a decision is beyond recall. His word was now pledged; his rigidly-faithful, Calvinistic mother, however displeased she might be, would never ask him to go back from it. She would have worked, and might have worked successfully, to prevent his committing this deed; but, once done, the honour of a Waldstein,—nay, more than this, the truth and loyalty of a God-fearing man,—were at stake. She would fold her hands in grim silence, and pray inwardly for her son and this Moabitish woman who had enthralled him; she would utter no complaint, he well knew. Her reply was characteristic, and contained in these few words:—

"Marriage is a solemn thing, not lightly to be entered upon. I trust thou art not so entering upon it, my son. May the Lord prosper this, and whatever else thy hands find to do! Without his blessing, what is the beauty of the flesh?—the lust of the eyes? The excellent Clara von Hanecke, whom I desired for thee, is not comely; but she is a godly young woman, and her dowry would have been serviceable to thee. So that thy wife be spiritually minded, however, it is but of small account that she be poor in this world's goods. Yet will I not conceal that, for the sake of that vast marsh which needs reclaiming, it would be well if she had brought thee something, as Clara would have done. But the Lord has so willed it; and is not His word more than corn and oil? Therefore I say nought . . . Since it is thy desire that I should pass the brief remainder of my days under thy roof, here will I remain. I have never been on a railroad; to undertake the journey to Paris were an impossibility. But I will wrestle with the Lord in prayer for thee, and prepare the green chamber, which has not been used since thy father's death. It is more commodious than the one thou hast hitherto slept in. The curtains, though faded, are serviceable yet . . . I would that thy Margaret's father had not been in trade. One chief reason why thy father and I were so suitably and happily mated was that each of our families could trace a clear descent for four hundred years. Yet are we not all dust alike in the Lord's eyes? Therefore I say nought.

"My son, I press thee to my bosom.

"ELIZABETH VON WALDSTEIN (née de Germet).

"Post scriptum.—Pastor Goldfuss has been with me. He sends thee his blessing. He fears the Americans are but a lax people in spiritual things. The Lord hath seen fit to prosper the farm; our cheeses have fetched rare prices in the markets this month. Also of the vineyard the prospects are good."

It could hardly be called a cordial letter,—not so much as a kind message to Margaret; but it was all that Rudolph could hope for, and he breathed a great sigh of relief when he got it. The worst, at least, was over. He did not read the old Gräfin's letter to Mrs. Willington; but he told her and Margaret that his mother was ready to open her arms to his bride, and was already preparing a room for her reception.

Two days afterwards Mrs. Willington left Homburg for Paris, to prepare the *corbeille de mariage*, which now occupied all her thoughts; and the happy lover parted from her and her daughter at Strasburg, whence his road lay across the Black Forest to a certain solitary district, where the castle of Waldstein dominates the country round.

II.

"I HAVE had the green hangings turned, and the chamber is fit for a princess," said Madame Mère,—thus her son styled her sometimes,—severely.

"But, mother——" said the young Graf with some hesitation, "Margaret will require another room,—a sitting-room, you see. All women in the present day have a boudoir, and——"

"Is not the saloon good enough for her, pray? It has been good enough for me these five-and-thirty years. She will always find me there, when I am not at my devotions. What can she want of a private sitting-room?"

"Why, you see—to begin with, there—there will be her mother—— Yes," he continued more rapidly, but taking care not to look the Gräfin in the face,—“yes, Mrs. Willington is coming, you know,—for a time, at least,—and I wish every attention to be paid to her comfort. I—I desire—I think it best that she should have the tapestried room that looks south, and then the one between it and ours Margaret can have as a boudoir, when she and her mother want to be together.”

This was doing the thing firmly, and he gave himself great credit for his pluck. The Gräfin Waldstein folded her hands meekly; had her son boxed her on the ear she could not have looked more long-suffering, more mildly-reproachful.

"So, then—Madame Willington—is coming—to live here?"

"I didn't say to live,—not exactly to live, mother. I don't know how long she'll stay. But, of course, being alone in the world, it is natural Margaret should wish her mother to be with her a good deal,—just at first, at all events."

The Gräfin said no more, for she was not a lady who was accustomed to waste her words, and she saw that this thing was to be. It was a great aggravation to her trials, the prospect of this intrusion of the stranger-woman's mother, who would of course try and dispute the Gräfin's authority over her daughter. She had hated the thought of this marriage from the first, but at least she had looked to have a chance of moulding her young daughter-in-law according to her own pattern. And, lo! already a formidable obstacle arose. She said no more, but heaved a sigh, which was almost a groan in its intensity. Then she drew out her spectacles, and opened a volume of "*Méditations*" at the place indicated by a marker, and appeared to forget her son's presence, and all other mundane matters, in the book before her.

The Gräfin von Waldstein was of a very old German Swiss family, nurtured in the severest school of Calvinism, which is not the religion of those parts. She was looked upon with great reverence by all right-minded persons, being an admirable woman, whether morally

or theologically regarded, who had done her duty strictly,—very strictly,—to her son, her servants, the pastor she had brought here, and the poor of her persuasion,—they were but few,—ever since the late Graf's death, eighteen years ago. She was autocratic and narrow-minded,—as who would not be whose ideas were circumscribed to one small circle, where his power was absolute? She regarded her Zwinglian and Moravian neighbours with righteous intolerance. The absence of the demonstratively religious life, of all fervid dogmatism, of that slang in familiar intercourse which has been styled "*le patois de Canaan*," were so many offences in the eyes of Madame Mère. She would have better suffered their differences had they been more objective, for one may do battle to any hard, definite body of religious opinions, and belabour them soundly; but the tendency to avoid discussion, to set aside all outward signs of devotion, to use Faith solely as a spring of life and strength in the performance of duty,—this was miserable, unsatisfactory work. The Gräfin had very little intercourse with her neighbours in consequence. Her habits had become German in the course of all those years, but her faith was the faith of her youth, unmitigated—nay, harder and firmer than ever. She was not an unkind or a stupid old woman; she possessed considerable clearness of perception, as may have been already gathered, and that mysterious power of "management" against which most men struggle vainly. She did, and liked doing, a vast number of charitable things; but it was in her own way, with a pious tyranny, which was sometimes galling to the recipients of her bounty. She was white-haired, and rather infirm now; but had none of those ineffable charms of voice and expression which make old age sometimes the rival of childhood in attractiveness. She was generally dressed in a coarse black stuff, with a thick white cap, not very much unlike a night-cap,—if I may be permitted to say so,—tied under her chin; a book under her arm, and a large heavy bunch of keys hanging at her side. Let it not be supposed that because she was a Gräfin she was not a most vigilant housewife, devoting what time she had to spare from the study of eternal punishments in store for the unregenerate, to the mending of linen, the auditing of farm-accounts, the preserving of fruits, and the careful entry of market returns. The little town of Waldstadt, over against the Schloss, at the foot of the hill,—which was one great vineyard,—had its weekly market, and so had two other towns a few miles distant, one of these being on Swiss territory; so for the products of the Waldstein estate there was always a plentiful demand.

It had been a great disappointment to Madame Mère,—as may have been already gathered,—that her son, for the first and only time in his life, had stubbornly resisted her in the matter of that marriage upon which she had set her heart. The Fräulein von Hanecke was one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Queen of Württemberg. She was

an orphan, and possessed a pretty little fortune. She was of curiously old descent, and her rigid education in the Calvinistic faith pointed her out in a special manner as a fitting person to be the daughter-in-law of the Gräfin Waldstein, if not the wife of that lady's only son. Unfortunately, the "hochwohlgeborne Fräulein" was not personally attractive in the young Graf's eyes. He told his mother he was willing to do anything she wished, even to the selling of half his estate,—the value of which, by-the-bye, had been greatly over-estimated by Mrs. Willington,—and devoting it to pious and charitable objects; but this thing he could not do. He knew all Clara's good qualities, and he recognised all the advantages of an alliance which the General, her uncle, did not hesitate to say his niece was quite ready to contract. The young lady had made up her mind it would be a suitable marriage. She liked Rudolph; she esteemed him. She was one of those sensible, amiable women, who can take a dispassionate, bird's-eye view of such matters; and who, in the event of what is called a "disappointment," have far too well-regulated minds to become ill or give up the world. It was well for her that it was so. It was now two years since this scheme had first been bruited by Madame Mere, and as nothing had come of it, Clara von Hanecke still continued "hofdame" to her royal mistress, and went cheerfully through the monotonous routine of a petty court life. Nevertheless, the Gräfin had not yet abandoned her hopes when the news of her son's engagement shivered them to the dust.

I must say a word about Schloss Waldstein. The country about it is not beautiful, but it would be accounted pretty, I think, by a stranger, unless perhaps he comes to it from the Swiss side. If so, he has done with rocky peak and snowy fastness, with roaring avalanches and mighty river-falls, before he gets here; and must attune himself to a lower key. Soft undulating hills, clad sometimes with the vine, sometimes with thick pine-woods; valleys where flocks and herds feed in rich pastures to the continuous tinkling of little bells; quaint, timbered churches, with many-beamed cottages about them,—no longer the Swiss toys that are so suggestive of the Opéra Comique; here and there a ruined tower; here and there a narrow wooden bridge, that looks, with all its lateral supports thrust wide into the stream, like a monster stretching his many legs very far apart;—this, and the sudden inestimable relief from all tourists, is what he will find who wanders up to the little-known region I write of. It has nothing remarkable to attract the traveller, and near at hand is scenery with a world-wide repute; no wonder, then, that those who turn their steps this way are few indeed. A "duller" district, in the estimation of mundanely-disposed persons, it would be hard to find.

And to this district Mrs. Willington, with the vaguest views of country life in general and of a Swiss or German château in particular,

was now coming. I believe she had visions of a continuous round of guests; a sort of Decameron; a throng of finely-dressed folk wandering about stately gardens, with the addition of much fiddling and feasting; and I know she ordered a great variety of clothes, which, when added to Margaret's trousseau, she was quite unable at the moment to pay for.

"I've spent an awful quantity of money," she said to her daughter just before the marriage; "and if it wasn't that I'm going to live at Rudolph's expense for some months to come, I don't know what I should do. Dear, delightful Paris is such a seductive place! There's no other place worth living in,—only one ought to be made of money. What a bracelet that was we saw in the Rue de la Paix! I told Rudolph it was the very thing for you. Do you think he means to give it you, my darling?"

"No, mamma; he told me he couldn't afford it; but that if I had really set my heart on it, he would get it,—even if it put him to inconvenience. Of course, I told him not."

"That was weak, my pet. I should have had it. It could make no real difference to him, you know. The old lady hoards money, I am told, in the most frightful way. Of course, we must introduce a change into all that. Rudolph is very dear, and nice, but he wants his ideas being a little enlarged."

"I suppose he does," said Margaret, dolefully. "He made such a fuss about my going to the Bois on Sunday. He thought I ought to go to the Oratoire again, I believe. And, mamma, I am so fond of him, that I don't think, really, I should care how often I went, if it was to please him. Only, as you say, I suppose it is better that his ideas should be enlarged. But what a noble, generous, devoted nature his is! I never saw anyone half as lovable. How lucky I am, mamma!"

"Yes, dear, very. Marriage is such a lottery. Now we must be off to Monsieur Worth's, or your things won't be ready for next week."

Early in November they were married, with a pomp which Waldstein would willingly have avoided, but which nothing would induce his mother-in-law to forego. And immediately after the ceremony, contrary to all English conventionalities, the young Count and Countess set off for their home, accompanied by Mrs. Willington.

The day they reached Schloss Waldstein had been one of constant rain, and perhaps it was as well that they arrived long after dark; though the laurel arch, with "Wilkommen" in gilt letters thereon, was consequently invisible to those for whose honour and benefit it was meant, and the peasants who had constructed it were much disappointed in consequence. But the little town looked impressively dreary, with rain pouring out of the water-pipes in all directions, and uniting in one black torrent over the steep, ill-paved street; and the brown, bare vineyards beyond, seen through the

soaking November gloom, were hardly more reassuring. Therefore, as far as Margaret, who was unfortunately impressionable in such things, was concerned,—not to speak of her mother,—it was as well that Waldstadt and the surrounding country were not revealed under their least favourable aspect, but that the veil of darkness covered them. The peasants and town's folk might do what they liked, of course, but Madame Mère was not going to erect triumphal arches, dispense good cheer, or otherwise expend in wasteful folly to do honour to her son's marriage the money that could more profitably be employed in pious and charitable works. So the courtyard of the Schloss was as dark as pitch,—dark and wet; and Madame Mère sat in the old yellow drawing-room, where, after some demur, she lit a couple of candles, in addition to her ordinary lamp with its green shade. That was the only outward and visible sign of welcome that awaited the bridegroom and his bride.

Margaret had been lying asleep on her husband's arm for the last half-hour. She only woke as the steps of the carriage were let down, and came in a little nervous, but her beautiful face all a-glow with pleasure, and threw herself into Madame Mère's arms. The latter kissed her very kindly, and improved the occasion with a murmured prayer and exhortation; then she turned to Mrs. Willington, who was warming her hands at the stove, and examining with amazement the cap, the garments, the general aspect of Rudolph's mother.

"This is Mrs. Willington, liebe Mutter," said Waldstein.

"You are welcome to our home, madame," said the old lady, and held out a homely, unringed hand. Mrs. Willington put the tips of her Jouvin's glove, with its four buttons and the cascade of lockets falling over it, into the horny receptacle the Gräfin proffered, and smiled a galvanised smile. Then the latter, in her turn, passed her eyes with curious scrutiny over this new-comer, and sighed.

They were shown to their bed-rooms, while supper was being prepared.

"Good heavens! no fire in one's room such a night as this!" cried Mrs. Willington. Then she looked for a bell; but there was none,—none throughout the Schloss, as she soon learnt. Her remarkably penetrating voice soon brought some one to her assistance, however,—her maid was superintending the right allotment of sundry huge trunks to the several rooms,—and then Madame Mère was informed that Mrs. Willington demanded fire. Margaret did not demand it, though, to say the truth, she was shivering in her room; but, then, she had a Rudolph, and her mother had not; and this Rudolph, without screaming for servants, and without a word from his wife, went and lit the stove himself.

"It is a wretched room," exclaimed Mrs. Willington, looking round. "What a bed! It's like a chest of drawers! And such a washing-stand! And as to the toilet-glass,—good heavens! half the quick-

silver is gone. No carpet, too,—ugh! How I hate those horrid stoves! And I don't see any place to hang up my gowns; and,—Cécile, go and ask for some candles. I can't dress with that one horrid light,—it's really too bad!"

Then Madame Mère was informed that Mrs. Willington demanded candles,—wax candles; and, raising her eyes to heaven, she unlocked the store-closet, and took out a pair with her own hands.

There was plenty of food for supper, and, of its kind it was not bad; but to appetites accustomed to a French cuisine, heavy German dishes are a trial; and Mrs. Willington, especially, did not bear the trial well. Margaret ate what was brought to her, and tried to think it nice; for Rudolph, she knew, would be vexed if she appeared to think otherwise; but she felt as though she were almost guilty of a disloyalty to her mother all the time, who was entering a silent, but expressive pantomimic protest against one dish after another. Madame Mère made as though she saw it not; but she did see it. No movement or look of either mother or daughter escaped her. She had begun the meal with a thanksgiving, and by invoking a blessing, at considerable length, upon what they were about to eat; if Mrs. Willington was impious enough to disregard this, she, Madame Mère, was doubly bound to show that the invocation had been answered, and she accordingly partook of almost everything at the table. She spoke but little. Rudolph talked, and exerted himself to make conversation general; but it was a hopeless work,—like a game of battledore in which every player but one lets the shuttlecock fall to the ground. Margaret did, indeed, make a feeble attempt to second him, and laughed whenever she saw an opportunity; but she felt very tired, and rather awe-stricken with Madame Mère's long prayers, and was secretly longing to be in her own room with Rudolph, where she would be at her ease. But this was not to be,—not unless she fainted outright,—for a good hour yet. No trifling excuse would have availed to spare her the long evening psalms, with two chapters from the Bible, and an exhortation, which followed the removal of supper. Mrs. Willington might yawn as audibly as she chose; she might look at her watch, and even go the length of taking off her bracelets. Madame Mère was inexorable as Fate. She would not have spared them a denunciation,—not skipped a single sentence of the wrathful homily, if their lives had depended on it.

The next morning the two ladies did not come down to breakfast; and thereby missed the morning edition of what had caused them such protracted suffering the night before. Rudolph appeared, of course, and he brought his wife's excuses. She was tired, and not yet accustomed to such early hours. Madame Mère shook her head, and murmured a supplication that the benighted young woman might be brought to see the culpability of sloth and self-indulgence. Then Rudolph took up his wife's breakfast to her with his own hands.

"I have seen poor mamma," said Margaret plaintively, "and she is very unhappy at having no garde-robe. She says all her beautiful gowns cannot possibly remain packed up always. Mine, too, will be quite spoilt, I'm afraid. What is to be done? Do see about it, dear."

He remembered two fine roomy old oak cupboards. It was true that some shelves had been put into them, and they had been devoted to apples; but these might be taken out, and it would be better than nothing in the present exigency. Only, what would his mother say? Perhaps it were wise to have the thing done, if possible, without her knowing it? It was not to be. She came, and caught him with an old servant baling out the apples on the floor.

"What dost thou with the apples, Rudolph?"

He tried to put a bold face on it, but stammered a little when he came to the purpose for which the cupboards were wanted. The vain adornments of women! If there was one subject upon which his mother could be more severe than any other it was this. Did he not know how she would quote Saint Paul, and visit the Corinthians upon his unhappy wife? However, he had to get it out, and he did so with some attempt at pleasantry. The old lady stood aghast.

"And, pray, what are we to do with the apples?" she said at last.

"Eat them, liebe Mutter; there is nothing else for it," he replied, with a shocking effort to laugh.

The worst of it was, that his well-meant crusade to rescue these sacred places of his mother's, and hand them over to the strangers, was not rewarded with the gratitude it deserved. Mrs. Willington declared that her gowns smelt so abominably of apples, that they made her sick for weeks afterwards. The subject made him sick, I know; what with the old Gräfin, upon one hand, with her Jeremiads, and Mrs. Willington with her complaints, on the other, he suffered many things because of those apples, and used to declare,—for he was driven to small jests,—that if the famous tree in the garden of Eden was really an apple-tree, he had been unfairly dealt by, for the knowledge he had of that fruit was all of evil, and none of good.

To continue the programme of this first day,—which will serve as a sample of many succeeding weeks,—Rudolph led his wife out, as soon as she was dressed, into the quaint old garden overhanging the vineyard, on the south side of the Schloss. It was a soberly fine autumn morning; the splendours of the year, its blue and gold, its emeralds and many-coloured jewels, were departed; but there was the first hint of silver frost in the air, and the tender opal of the sky, and the soft lustre of pale smoke and sunshine over the little town of Waldstadt in the valley yonder. The garden, which was in terraces, was separated from the vineyard by a low parapet wall. The angles of this wall, which were turret-shaped, held circular benches, where,

of summer evenings, it was pleasant to sit and look over the great slope of vineyard, and beyond the steep, winding road, and across the valley to the fir-clad hills, so darkly green and cool. On such a morning as this, however, "*sub Jove frigido*," exercise was better than repose, and the young couple walked for an hour upon this lowest terrace of the garden. Margaret felt very happy; it was pleasant to walk thus, with his strong arm around her, and his handsome face bent over hers, in this quaint garden under the clear autumn sky. Away from her mother, she could forget all minor troubles; with Mrs. Willington present, they stood between Margaret and contentment.

"This is better than the noise of Paris, after all, *Herzchen*, is it not?" he said.

"'Tis with you, Rudolph; not alone."

"It seems as if, in great cities, in great crowds, two hearts can never hear each other beat in perfect unison, for the din and turmoil round them."

It was a little bit of German sentimentality, and Margaret was not sentimental; but she liked it in Rudolph's mouth, and could understand it on this occasion. She looked up with a lovely smile.

"Nothing can prevent our hearing each other here, can it? But you're going to do everything I ask, ain't you, Rudolph? Not for me, dear,—for, indeed, I feel as if I want nothing now with you,—but for poor mamma, who is making such sacrifices on my account in coming here. I couldn't be happy, you know, if she were miserable."

"I hope she will not be miserable. Why should she? My mother, I am sure, wishes—will try to do everything to make her happy. Our manner of life is very different to what Mrs. Willington is used to. We are very quiet, simple folk here, and she will have to accustom herself to the absence of society; but with you and me, *Herzchen*, she oughtn't to be dull, and won't be, I hope."

Margaret probably knew better; but she said nothing, and tried to dismiss the subject from her thoughts. This was not difficult at the moment, for she felt perfectly happy while alone with her husband. But some half-hour later they were joined by Mrs. Willington.

"My dear Rudolph, when are you going to begin refurnishing the château? The state it is in is perfectly disgraceful. Margaret cannot possibly receive her friends in such a salon, with tarnished mirrors and threadbare sofas. And as to our bed-rooms, I do hope you will write off to-day, and get a *tapisserie* from Strasburg, or somewhere, to come and make them decent. I have been thinking about it, and I have decided on having rose colour and white for my room. What do you say for yours, my darling?"

Margaret murmured that perhaps blue would be pretty. Rudolph walked along in silence, his eyes upon the ground, his wife's hand, which he held in his, still resting on his arm.

"Of course you mean to alter this garden," continued Mrs. Willington, presently. "This arrangement is so dreadfully old-fashioned. A *jardin Anglais* is the thing here. Whose is that big white house on the distant hill? That looks like a rich neighbour,—and the only one, I suppose."

"It belongs to a rich manufacturer, whose mills you see in the valley below. He is a very worthy man, but we don't associate. The distinction of classes is still kept up in this country. It is very absurd, I think, but so it is."

Mrs. Willington, whose husband had been in the wholesale oil-cloth line in New York,—which did not prevent her having aristocratic proclivities, now that she was allied to one of the oldest families in South Germany,—was not so opposed to class distinctions.

"Well, one must draw the line somewhere, I suppose. But what do you do for neighbours? Have you absolutely no society?"

"None, except the village pastor, and one or two old ladies, friends of my mother's, who visit her occasionally."

"Good heavens!"—Mrs. Willington clasped her hands,—"*and you call this existence? How can you have lived all these years in such a state of things? But you have surely had friends staying with you?*"

"Occasionally a man or two from Switzerland. I was at college there, and have cousins at Geneva, moreover. Sometimes one of them comes for the *chasse* in the winter. No one else, except General von Hanecke, who lives not very far off, and sometimes rides over."

"Ah, my dear Rudolph! we must alter all that for you. We shall have to import our society from Paris, I see."

Again he was silent; and, turning to her daughter, she went on,—

"The dear marquise and her daughter promised to come to you, you know; and so did Monsieur de Boisjelin, and several more."

A bell here rang opportunely, summoning them, so Rudolph said, to dinner.

"Dinner at one! Good heavens! Rudolph, you don't mean to say that you keep such barbarous hours?"

"Call the meals by whatever name you like, my dear Mrs. Willington,—they are really the same. This is your luncheon, and our eight o'clock supper your dinner. Moreover, we have the tea and coffee of civilised life at half-past five. But my mother is old-fashioned, and does not like change, so we always keep to the old names and hours of our meals."

"Ah! people at that time of life are peculiar. Still,—how old is she? Wonderfully active."

"Yes; I am thankful to say she is, for her years. She is sixty-eight, and has a capital head for business still,—indeed, she has the enjoyment of all her faculties."

The expression of Mrs. Willington's face spoke volumes, if Rudolph

could have seen it ; but she said nothing, and they all entered the dining-room.

After dinner, a high and very spidery-looking vehicle, of the mail-phaeton tribe, was brought to the door by a stalwart groom "bearded like the pard," and dressed in what was meant to be the true English style. Of course, Rudolph wished to drive his wife out ; but it was a fine afternoon, and what was Mrs. Willington to do ? Was she to be left to a tête-à-tête with the Gräfin ? Rudolph thought that this was not likely to tend to the softening of either lady's sentiments ; and he wished to avoid it, if possible. But what was to be done ? Of course Margaret must sit beside him, and the only other place was at the back, alongside of the bearded groom. He put it to Mrs. Willington, and she hesitated. It was derogatory, no doubt ; but was not anything better than being left alone in that horrid dull old house, with that dreadful puritanical old woman ? She had a chance of seeing some one, at all events ; and she could address an observation occasionally over the hood to the young people in front. She elected, and wisely, no doubt, to endure the indignity ; and though they saw no one in their drive but a few peasants and one commis-voyageur, standing at the inn-door, as they rattled down the little street of Waldstadt,—Rudolph, like most foreigners, being a perfect Jehu in the fury of his driving,—yet "it was a change," as she said, "and anything is better than being alone." They passed a Roman Catholic church, and met a couple of priests,—I had forgotten them,—a little farther on ; when Rudolph explained to Margaret that the district here was not entirely Protestant, and that all religions were tolerated. She was glad to hear this : she began to have a fear that if the Gräfin's will were omnipotent there would not be such liberality on this point.

In the evening the Pasteur called to pay his respects to the young Graf's bride. He was a spare, mild-eyed man of fifty, simple-minded, ignorant of the world's ways, and "thinking no evil" of any one ; shambling, tedious, voluble. He was bidden to stay supper, and sat next to Mrs. Willington, to whom he addressed himself several times, but in vain. When he asked some question about the American Church, it was Margaret, across the table, who replied. When he expressed a hope that the elder lady had not suffered from the journey,—in the eyes of the good Pasteur, who had not been twenty miles from Waldstadt in as many years, Paris was at the world's end,—Mrs. Willington only shook her head, and yawned ; it was Rudolph who came to the rescue, with some statistical account of the French railroads, and the increased traffic to Strasburg, with a good deal about "kilos," which seemed to interest both gentlemen, and was incomprehensible to the ladies. The Pasteur's own talk was chiefly small and local, and directed principally to Madame Mère. She knitted her grey worsted stocking, even at the supper table, and discussed the temporal and spiritual

needs of those amongst the Waldstadt poor who belonged to the small number of the "elect," with forcible sense and rigorous justice. But to Mrs. Willington, and indeed, it must be confessed, to Margaret, too, all this was inexpressibly wearisome. The evening ended with a lengthy exhortation from the Pasteur, and prayers in which blessings were invoked in many long-winded phrases upon the bridegroom and his bride. At the time, Margaret got such a pain in her knees that she fervently wished the blessings shortened: she remembered them, years afterwards, in penitence and tears.

"That old woman will be the death of me!" said Mrs. Willington to her daughter, as she went to bed. "This sort of thing never can go on. You must very soon put a stop to it, my darling, if you don't wish to have my death at your door. I feel already ten years older than I did when I came here."

PLATO.

A VISION of the bright and glorious past
Arose before me. In the golden haze
That glorifies our dreaming, one wide-browed,
With regal eyes and calm, his forehead bound
With violets, strode out of the mists of time
And filled my spirit with his radiant gaze.

A rapture as of an unearthly bliss
Possessed me, as I saw his grave, deep eyes
Shine, with unwavering lustre, through the dusk ;
For well I knew the godlike lineaments
And stately shape of Athens' greatest sage ;
And as I gazed upon his majesty,
My rapture blossomed into burning words.

" O Aristocles ! rightly named ! " * I said.
" For surely, since the term of thy brief life,
The grandeur of thy world-wide thoughts has spread
Over the surface of the teeming earth,
And all the pulsing flood of sympathy,
That courses through the veins of kindred men,
Linking their souls with an electric chain,
Throbs to the rhythm of thy magic words.
For though but to a chosen few are known
Thy luminous, clear glimpses of God's truth,
Yet, as a low and softly murmuring rill
Of sweetest music, rippling heedlessly
Close to the dull ears of care-centred men,
Enwinds itself unconsciously about
The tense-strung brain and toil-bewildered mind,
Chasing the grosser thoughts and meaner cares,
That erst did hold dominion there, until
The heaven-sweet melody is left alone
To work its own pure mission and enspell
The passionate pulses to a soothing calm,
Pregnant with all good things,—so, in our time,
The influence of thy glorious, fire-born soul,
Embodied in the wonder of thy words,
Reaches the heart of many a just man,
Although he wis it not, and makes him muse
Upon times past and times to come and dream
Wise, noble thoughts of Nature and of God,
That ripen into generous action's fruit,
Unconscious, all the while, from whence may come
The magic that enthalls him.

* Πλάτων.

"Would to God

That thou wert living now, to lend thine aid
To swell the voices,—few and weak, alas!—
Of those unflinching, true and generous souls,
That strive to win the grasping, blinded age
Back to the nobler aims and purer thoughts!"

His visage lightened with a look of calm,
Unsmiling sweetness and his brow seemed crowned
With the majestic beauty of his soul.
And he to me: "Fear not,—the dice of God
Are loaded ever on the side of ill.*
The good falls always uppermost. No need
Is there of me to work the destinies
Of ages yet to come. My work is done;
And work well done can never pass away,
But shines out through the vista of the years,
A star of promise to all constant men.
The gods adjust the balance. Every time
Has its own nobleness. Although it hide
Awhile beneath the film of current ills,
Yet can the dust of evil no more crush
The germ of truth than can o'erlying heaps
Of plough-turned earth press out the principle
Or life within a single grain of wheat.
Take heart and wait,—the years bring on the light,
That solves the problem. As old proverbs say,
Truly Aurora's herald, Hesperus,
The star of night and morn, brings everything.
One needs but patience; and the disc of wrong
Revolves in time and shows its other side
Bright with the pure gold of accomplished right.
No true work but must bear the load of years,—
No noble thing that must not dare the test
Of time and waiting, fear and darkling doubt,
Before it shines out incontestably
God's truth, as the dull crystal in the mine
Matures for ages in the night of time
Within the mystic bowels of the earth,
Ere the pure diamond hardens into light.
But all more precious is the work fulfilled,
Since two of God's especial attributes,
Patience and silence, usher in its life."

J. P.

* Οἱ κέρβοι Ἀνὸς αἰεὶ ἐνέριπτον.

THE SPANISH GYPSY.

Of all the changes which time has worked in our social system, there is none so striking as that which has taken place during the last hundred years in the position of women. From the time when dexterity in wielding the pen was as remarkable a feat in a feminine hand as the use of the sword would be now, we have reached the day, when the most striking originality a woman can boast of is the fact that she has not yet published a book.

It is an originality which few preserve for long; a fretting fever breaking into multitudinous eruptions of ink is in general possession of the women of the nineteenth century, extending to almost all classes, from the daintily perfumed duchess to the unwashed maid-of-all-work.

That a vast mass of rubbish is the result of this excessive activity is not to be denied. It is not to be disputed that a large number of women, who cannot write well, do write ill; that many who would go harmlessly through life, if they sought nothing beyond the ordinary round of daily duties, do infinite damage by aspiring to gifts not intended for them, and industriously sow the seeds of a pernicious literature,—pernicious sometimes from sheer ignorance, which propagates bad models,—incomplete in thought, incorrect in language, and weak in invention; and in other cases more injurious still, from that dangerous pretension of weakness to strength, which seeks a refuge from inanity by a forced and unholy alliance with license and depravity. It is not to be gainsayed that these distinctive characters mark the bulk of womanish novels which load the counter of the circulating library; but if this be true of the larger proportion, it is also true that there exists besides a considerable number of excellent works of fiction produced by women, and that we may add to these a small sum marked by such genius as no man has yet surpassed.

Among the French there is at present a diminution in the quantity of novel-writing women, and those who are best known are of such doubtful character, that a Frenchman, intending to convey an unpleasant insinuation concerning a lady, shrugs his shoulders and says, "*Mais enfin elle a écrit un roman.*" On the other hand, in Sweden and Denmark some charming works bear the impress of a feminine hand, and the writing of fiction is on the increase in those countries as much with women as with men. Nor is it only in the

gardens of literature that the advancing education of women bears fruit. We find it in every domain of art. In sculpture the young American Miss Hosmer is eminent ; in painting Rosa Bonheur is paramount when she opens to our view a rich pasturage with cattle grazing, or wild moors with the mottled deer trooping across them, or great horse-fairs with sturdy men buying and selling, and bright suns and deep-blue skies shedding their radiance over all. But still it remains a fact, that the proportion of successful endeavour is smaller amongst women than men, and that very few women have shown themselves capable of a long-sustained effort; so that when there appeared ten years ago a work of fiction in three volumes, called "*Adam Bede*," wherein there was no faltering chapter, which contained an equal combination of vigour, and beauty, and sagacity, and subtle observation, the world at large attributed the production to a man. It was thought by many critics that a performance so unwavering in its strength could not proceed from a feminine hand. But those critics were mistaken. It was a woman who wrote "*Adam Bede*;" and the force and delicacy of touch, the profound and extensive knowledge of the humours and passions of mankind, of all nature, of art and of science, of history, of times present and past, of all, in short, that men most wish to know,—these rare qualities, first recognised in "*Adam Bede*," were developed to the reader in fuller perfection in every succeeding volume from the same author. In one of these works, called "*Felix Holt*," fabricated poetical headings affixed to each chapter indicated the power of a poet; and studious readers dwelt on them, wondering whether they might not one day see an ample stream swell from that hidden source. It has risen now, not with the fret, the brawl, and clamour which belong to shallow waters, but with the unbroken strength and divine radiance of a deep, majestic river. The poem of the "*Spanish Gypsy*," by George Eliot, is not of a fragmentary or spasmodic character; nor is it of that slight melodious kind which pleases the ear for awhile and then satiates. It is a prolonged grave harmony of elevated and pathetic strain. Through all its ringing changes,—and it has many,—there still prevails a tone of meditative sadness.

The form in which the poem is cast is peculiar. It is an alternation of narrative with dramatic dialogue. A drama is explained by the presence of narrative; or a narrative intensified by dramatic scenes,—a difficult and almost hazardous form to adopt, one which evidently requires great skill in the handling, lest in the passage from one kind of composition to the other the reader should experience too abrupt a transition, a sensation too much akin to that of a jolt or jerk; too violent an interruption to the flow of thought and emotion. Nor has this danger been entirely escaped. There are times when the mind, lulled by the gliding movement of narration, is waked into uneasiness by the sudden appearance of characters who act and speak

for themselves with their separate individualities, startled with the breaks and pauses incidental to varied dialogue, with entrances and exits, and the blemish of stage directions; and there are moments also when the interest of dramatic action and passion is too much suspended by the interference of the story-teller.

But this fault is only recognised occasionally, and, on the whole, the machinery of the poem is conducted with astonishing dexterity and smoothness from the first geographical description of Spain to the last tragical parting-scene on the shores of Almeria. The impression left by the poem is that of a deep tragedy; not grasping at the heart with convulsive throes, but sinking into its depths with a tender, solemn, abiding music.

Sorrow is foreseen from the beginning; the fatal passion of a human heart at war with the established order of human institutions is indicated in the opening dialogue at the Spanish hostelry, when it is told that Duke Silva, one of the most powerful of Spanish nobles, is about to wed Fedalma, a foundling adopted in childhood by his mother, the Duchess. The Duchess is dead. The Duke is about to give the love, honour, and protection of a husband to the beautiful Fedalma, and for this cause he will delay the siege of an important Moorish fortress which ought to be attacked at once. The Duke's uncle, Isidor, is a priest and an inquisitor. Suspecting Fedalma to be the offspring of an infidel race, he vehemently opposes the projected marriage; and, finding his nephew inaccessible to remonstrances, he resolves upon giving up the maiden to the mercies of the Holy Inquisition; while the Duke, on the other hand, is determined upon hurried and secret nuptials. But a power alien from both steps in between these two, and carries Fedalma away. In the middle of the night a note reaches her, announcing a visit from her father, who is Zarca, the king of the gypsies. She has seen him a chained prisoner, the head of a band taken fighting for the Moors. Not knowing who he was, she was moved at the sight of his affliction and his noble bearing, and in her gentleness has sued the Duke for the deliverance of the captives. Zarca is a man of high purpose: he has been educated by skilled Hebrews and Moors; it is his great scheme to regenerate his race; to found a monarchy; to establish it in Africa; to reign himself, and to be succeeded by his daughter. He works upon her wavering imagination, upon strange impulses, dimly felt before, fully recognised now. He rouses her sympathy, her admiration, her sense of sacred filial duty, and she follows him, leaving her lover with only a short note of explanation. Silva cannot support her absence,—detects the scheme of the Inquisition to burn her alive,—abhors his lot among her persecutors,—follows her,—swears an oath of fealty to the gypsy tribe and its monarch,—and finds himself finally with the enemies of Spain, involved in the attack on that citadel of Bedmar, the strong fastness of the Moors, which it should have been

his special honour to defend. At his feet lies the corpse of his dearest friend; and, led out for execution, he recognises Isidor, the inquisitor,—a man he thought he hated, but still yet one of his kindred, and once a chief prop of his power; he strives to arrest the execution in vain, and, in a frenzy of passion, stabs the gypsy king, Fedalma's father. Zarca, with his last breath, orders that the Spaniard shall go away from among them unhurt. Fedalma, true daughter to her father and true mother to her tribe, with averted head suffers him to go. They meet once more, but only for an eternal parting; and with that parting the poem concludes.

It is not our present business to dwell upon the sublime sorrow of this scene; for in seeking to give some notion of the unflagging excellence of the work, it is fitting to observe, as much as lies in our power, the order of the poet,—that order out of which consistent beauty grows,—and therefore we now return to the opening description which may be considered as the prelude to the theme.

In a poem which never affects obscurity, it seems an almost whimsical chance that the two first lines are hard to understand: we cannot satisfy ourselves completely of the author's meaning in comparing the lands of Europe to "fretted leaflets breathing on the deep,"—but we pass on with delight to the intelligible music of the following passage:—

"Broad-breasted Spain, leaning with equal love
(A calm earth-goddess crowned with corn and vines)
On the Mid Sea that mourns with memories,
And on the untravelled Ocean, whose vast tides
Pant dumbly passionate with dreams of youth.
This river, shadowed by the battlements
And gleaming silvery towards the northern sky,
Feeds the famed stream that waters Andalus
And loiters, amorous of the fragrant air,
By Córdoba and Seville to the bay
Fronting Algarva and the wandering flood
Of Guadiana."

We pause on the melodious sweetness of these lines, their soft pathos lingers in our recollection; they are touched with that tone of sadness which is the essence of poetical imagination, and which is gradually to swell, as the poem advances, into the fullest harmonies of passionate contrite sorrow and tender emotion. The flow of the narrative is not, however, uniformly smooth; occasionally, there is a movement in the rhythm unpleasant to the ear, which is probably introduced with intention to relieve monotony, but which is hardly needed in a work of which the construction affords frequent breaks and changes, deviating not only into dramatic dialogue, but into the by-paths of song.

One of the most agreeable characters unfolded in this dramatic poem is that of Juan, the minstrel, with his light tones and true heart, who

"Whistles low notes, or seems to thrum his lute
As a mere hyphen 'twixt two syllables
Of any steadier man."

"In his speech and look
A touch of graceful wildness, as of things
Not trained or tamed for uses of the world;
Most like the Fauns that roamed in days of old
About the listening whispering woods, and shared
The subtler sense of sylvan ears and eyes
Undulled by scheming thought, yet joined the rout
Of men and women on the festal days,
And played the syrinx too, and knew love's pains,
Turning their anguish into melody."

He follows Fedalma with the distant love of a chivalrous troubadour, always serving, never troubling her; risking all for her, sacrificing all to her, concentrating the whole energy of his nature upon the fulfilment of her wishes.

It is thus that he sings of her in the hostelry where the Duke's love, and the inquisitor's objections, and the maiden's theology have been made the subject of public talk, with some anxious interruptions of caution and apprehension:—

"Maiden, crowned with glossy blackness,
Lithe as panther forest-roaming,
Long-armed naiad, when she dances,
On a stream of ether floating—
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

"Form all curves like softness drifted,
Wave-kissed marble roundly dimpling.
Far-off music slowly winged,
Gently rising, gently sinking—
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

"Pure as rain-tear on a rose-leaf,
Cloud high-born in noon-day spotless,
Sudden perfect as the dew-bead,
Gem of earth and sky-begotten—
Bright, O bright Fedalma!

"Beauty has no mortal father,
Holy light her form engendered
Out of tremour, yearning, gladness,
Presage sweet and joy remembered—
Child of Light, Fedalma!

Song is followed by dance, and in the midst of the dance Fedalma suddenly appears unexpected, wondered at, urged by the strange impulse of her blood to follow the habits of her tribe, and to join in the rhythmic movement.

"Ardently modest, sensuously pure,
With young delight that wonders at itself
And throbs as innocent as opening flowers,

Knowing not comment—soilless, beautiful.
 The spirit in her gravely glowing face
 With sweet community informs her limbs,
 Filling their fine gradation with the breath
 Of virgin majesty."

The jubilant movement is interrupted by the march through the throng of the captive gypsy band; Fedalma's attention is arrested, and her compassion subdues her nature. Afterwards the Duke chides her for so unwary an exhibition of her charms to public admiration, being informed of the proceeding by Isidor, the priest. The scene of remonstrance and reconciliation between the lovers shows a depth of tenderness in these two hearts, which can admit of none but "sweet division," where discord dissolves and closes into a fuller, more concordant music, more complete, more perfect, because of its interruption.

The priest's soliloquy which follows upon this scene, is one of the most powerful passages in the drama, exhibiting the most subtle intricacies of the human conscience, its prevarications with itself, its unfair dealing with its own honest suggestions, its subversion of all truth to one faith, and of eternal justice to a narrow creed.

The man finally embraces cruelty and treachery, the most revolting of those crimes which have made the history of mankind a painful chronicle; but he embraces them, as he persuades himself, in the service of God. In her dealing with this sacerdotal iniquity, George Eliot has exhibited that masculine quality of mind which is able to see two sides to a question, to conceive a variety of shifting arguments affecting a final resolution, and to believe in the singleness of purpose and self-abnegation which frequently accompany a perverted righteousness. Women are mostly one-sided, and for this reason their genius is undramatic: their field of view is not large enough for a true representation of the drama of life, and their judgment is not candid enough for a perfectly fair interpretation of perplexed thought and action. It requires a considerable exercise of candour and patience to suppress your own views, to keep self wholly in the background, to be the mouthpiece of conflicting thoughts, opinions, and passions, and to refrain from passing sentence. In the spirit of justice, and in the dignity of reticence, George Eliot's genius is unlike that of her sex in general.

The same power which George Eliot puts forth in the metaphysical speculations of the inquisitor, and the rough dialogue commenting on the ways of men, in the Spanish hostelry, is felt in the sustained and delicate beauty of the poet's melodious strains. The exquisite music, and tender thought, and sweet imagery with which a southern night is invested in Fedalma's meditations, sink so deeply into the heart that they associate themselves unconsciously with every fine harmony of life; link themselves with all sweetness in the present and past,—with the rhythmic vibrations of the inspired musician, with the fine

design and delicious tints of the perfect painter, with the murmur of pleasant waters and the stir of cooling breezes.

"So soft a night was never made for sleep,
But for the waking of the finer sense
To every murmuring and gentle sound,
To subtlest odours, pulses, visitings
That touch our frames with wings too delicate
To be discerned amid the blare of day.

[She pauses near the window to gather some jasmine: then walks again.]

Surely these flowers keep happy watch—their breath
Is their fond memory of the loving light.
I often rue the hours I lose in sleep:
It is a bliss too brief, only to see
This glorious world, to hear the voice of love,
To feel the touch, the breath of tenderness,
And then to rest as from a spectacle.
I need the curtained stillness of the night
To live through all my happy hours again
With more selection—cull them quite away
From blemished moments. Then in loneliness
The face that bent before me in the day
Rises in its own light, more vivid seems
Painted upon the dark, and ceaseless glows
With sweet solemnity of gazing love,
Till like the heavenly blue it seems to grow
Nearer, more kindred, and more cherishing,
Mingling with all my being."

In passages expressing tenderness, whether dramatic or narrative, there is nothing more musical than the flow of George Eliot's lines. Here is a bit of dialogue, exquisite in fancy and in felicity of language, where Fedalma comments with pretty ingenuity to her lover upon the difficulty she finds in speaking her deepest thoughts to him:—

"I was right!

These gems have life in them: their colours speak,
Say what words fail of. So do many things—
The scent of jasmine, and the fountain's plash,
The moving shadows on the far-off hills,
The slanting moonlight and our clasping hands.
O Silva, there's an ocean round our words
That overflows and drowns them. Do you know
Sometimes when we sit silent, and the air
Breathes gently on us from the orange-trees,
It seems that with the whisper of a word
Our souls must shrink, get poorer, more apart.
Is it not true?

DON SILVA.

Yes, dearest, it is true.

Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken: even your loved words
Float in the larger meaning of your voice
As something dimmer."

The annunciation in melodious lines of those objects in nature which speak to full hearts with a more perfect charm than words,—the jasmine's scent, the fountain's plash, the moving shadow, closing with a suggestion of deeper emotion in the hand's touch, is a perfect piece of art ; it is the true poet's persuasion taking hold of the reader with gentle, irresistible advances.

We have dwelt especially on the most melodious passages because they are best represented in extracts ; but the power of the poet is not less evident in the dramatic action, in the stir and bustle of the gypsy camp, in the public throngs of noisy thoroughfares, in warlike preparation, in the transactions of busy life.

One of the most remarkable of the descriptive passages of the work is the character of Don Silva :—

“ Silva was both the lion and the man ;
 First hesitating shrank, then fiercely sprang,
 Or having sprung, turned pallid at his deed
 And loosed the prize, paying his blood for nought.
 A nature half transformed, with qualities
 That oft bewrayed each other, elements
 Not blent, but struggling, breeding strange effects,
 Passing the reckoning of his friends or foes.
 Haughty and generous, grave and passionate ;
 With tidal moments of devoutest awe,
 Sinking anon to farthest ebb of doubt ;
 Deliberating ever, till the sting
 Of a recurrent ardour made him rush
 Right against reasons that himself had drilled
 And marshalled painfully. A spirit framed
 Too proudly special for obedience,
 Too subtly pondering for mastery.”

Some critics have suggested that in the metaphysical subtleties of Silva there is more of the nineteenth than the fifteenth century ; but in reply to this suggestion we would urge the recollection of the historical fact that there flowed in Spain, during the fifteenth century, a new and full tide of thought, which brought with it many doubts at war with the despotism of bigotry, and many meditative men who were looked upon as dangerous sceptics ; and even if this were not the case, the character beyond is consistent in itself, and we must concede to the poet the possibility of a mind passing national and chronological limits ; for occasionally men do appear who think the thoughts of a future generation, and transcend their own, and with these men it fares ill. The perplexities which surround them get no solution in their own time : they are isolated, they have no kindred ; they might lead, but they can find no followers.

In pondering over a work of beauty, and seeking to communicate the sense of it to others, it is difficult to resist quotation ; yet fragments can give no just idea of the unity of excellence, and little is gleaned,

and the full harvest left. We yield to the temptation of one more effort at selection ; but that shall be the last.

“ We must walk

Apart unto the end. Our marriage rite
Is our resolve that we will each be true
To high allegiance, higher than our love.
Our dear young love—its breath was happiness!
But it had grown upon a larger life
Which tore its roots asunder. We rebelled—
The larger life subdued us. Yet we are wed;
For we shall carry each the pressure deep
Of the other's soul. I soon shall leave the shore.
The winds to-night will bear me far away.
My lord, farewell!

He did not say ‘Farewell.’

But neither knew that he was silent. She,
For one long moment, moved not. They knew nought
Save that they parted; for their mutual gaze
As with their soul's full speech forbade their hands
To seek each other—those oft-clasping hands
Which had a memory of their own, and went
Widowed of one dear touch for evermore.”

A picturesque description of the gypsy tribe's preparation for departure relieves this tender sadness, and then the poem closes. Fedalma sails away with her people to far-off, unknown lands, and watches Silva's bark bound for another shore.

“ Fedalma stood and watched the little bark
Lying jet-black upon moon-whitened waves.
Silva was standing too. He too divined
A steadfast form that held him with its thought,
And eyes that sought him vanishing: he saw
The waters widen slowly, till at last
Straining he gazed and knew not if he gazed
On aught but blackness overhung by stars.”

This final line, the “blackness overhung by stars,” presents an image corresponding with the state of mind induced by the poem. It is in harmony with a history of sorrow and of sacrifice, with the temper of suffering subdued by virtue. Destiny was dark for these lovers, but, like the black vault, “it was overhung by stars;” a celestial radiance glorifies the lofty aim and strong resolution; a great self-abnegation makes despair divine.

So high a strain is not in accordance with the fashion of the day. Poetry of late has stooped to stimulate the baser passions; to urge the soul to yield to desire; to enforce the impossibility of restraint; to set forth license as the proof of humanity, — as if it needed learning, eloquence, and a vast imagination to teach a man to behave like a brute. We have hitherto dwelt only on the artistic skill of George Eliot's work; but the artistic is heightened by the moral beauty of the work, and that for this reason it is recurred to with renewed delight again and again.

Moral beauty is the highest truth which men have discovered, and truth alone is permanently attractive. The more George Eliot's poem is read, the more will be found in it to read. The thought is packed close; the force is evenly diffused; it is not displayed with a sudden burst and a subsiding; it has the majesty of restraint; and we do not suspect the author at any time of exhaustion. This is quite unlike the general mode of feminine exertion, and equally unlike the mode at present in vogue among men. It is neither among the male nor female writers of the hour that we should look for George Eliot's parallel. Some men, replete with grace and prettiness, have been what we should call effeminate poets, from an absence of vigour and robust thought. Such are T. Moore and Talfourd, Waller and Metastasio, and in some degree Lamartine; but it is not among such that George Eliot is to be classed.

In seeking for one of her kindred, we touch upon the most masculine of poets: whenever she reminds us of any other writer, it is of the author of "*Artevelde*" and "*St. Clement's Eve*." She has not his perfect mastery over all the conditions of rhythm. From too great a fear of monotony, her prosody, as we have said before, is sometimes faulty; sometimes a line is overweighted with unaccented syllables, at others the *cæsura* falls into a strange position; yet many of her lines are singularly melodious, and this is true most often of those which carry a redundant syllable.

It is in the force of her thought, in its originality and vigorous expression, that she recalls the author of "*Artevelde*;" frequently too, in the direction which it takes. This is the case in the talk of the host of the inn with his customers in their comments on theology, and on the ways of the *grandees*, and in their tone of ironical humour and grave jest. But though we occasionally trace such a resemblance, in the general tenor of the dramatic dialogue, there is no appearance of direct imitation in any particular passage, and George Eliot is an essentially original poet.

LORD PALMERSTON.

How deep is the silence which has already stolen over the memory of Lord Palmerston! But yesterday he was in the midst of us, and his name has now passed utterly from the circle of current and exciting topics. It was foreseen that this would be the case. Both in France and in England the remark was made at the time of his death, that the event would date an epoch in English politics, and that the grave of Lord Palmerston closed upon an old order of things. It is not that we have forgotten him, but that there is nothing to connect his personality with the subjects which now engage the attention of politicians and agitate the nation's mind. A period of storm and conflict has immediately succeeded a period of intense repose, and amid the din of the elements no one recalls the slumbrous murmur of the stream, or the neutral tint of the pale grey sky. The spell by which Lord Palmerston held all parties in affectionate allegiance consisted in this,—that he, and he alone, enabled politicians, without serious upbraiding either from their consciences or their constituencies, to take things easy. There are peremptory instincts in the human breast which affirm that the ingredients of this spell were not altogether noble,—that the rest for which our legislators were so devoutly thankful to Lord Palmerston was not heroic; but the feeling with which he was regarded in the country was much the same as that with which he was regarded in the House; and as it has never been seriously disputed that the people of the United Kingdom are a practical and active-minded race, it can have been only through some notable conjuncture of circumstances or instructive peculiarity of character, that the kindly acquiescence in things as they are, natural for a hale and successful gentleman of eighty, was accepted as supreme political wisdom by the English nation, and is now looked back upon by many with a sigh of pensive and yearning reminiscence.

Lord Palmerston was the finest specimen of a race fertile in superior men. Lightness and geniality of temperament, combined with shrewdness, moral stability, and excellent intellectual parts, made the Temples a distinguished and prosperous kindred. Qualities high and fine, qualities graceful and glancing, rather than transcendent, characterised the race. They were literary, though they produced no man of supreme literary genius; they had a rare tact in diplomacy, though their most eminent man of affairs before Lord Palmerston was the judicious and smooth-tongued Sir William Temple,

of the Triple Alliance. They shone as secretaries and confidential friends; they were good company. Philip Sidney had a Sir William Temple for secretary. A history of the Irish Civil War was written by a Sir John Temple. An instinct of moderation never left them. Their dwelling was in that safest region of the social atmosphere which is well out of the valley mist, and yet too low to draw the lightnings. Clearness, animation, alertness, adroitness, activity, good sense, good temper, good health, gifts and qualities which, above all, make men successful and gracefully prevalent, were theirs. And you could not, in equally narrow compass, say anything so comprehensively and correctly descriptive of Lord Palmerston as this,—that he was the first of the Temples with their good qualities in higher perfection than had been previously witnessed, and their more questionable characteristics, their prudence, their caution, their worldly wisdom, elevated into a manly vigilance and self-possession not inconsistent with intrepidity. All the best qualities of a sweet-blooded and happy race met in their best form in Lord Palmerston.

The first traces we have of him befitted the youth of a Temple. Attracted to the University of Edinburgh by the splendid reputation of its professors, he attended the lectures of Dugald Stewart on Political Economy, and so copious and correct were the notes he took that when, many years subsequently, Sir William Hamilton prepared his edition of the lectures from the note-books of students, "by far the most valuable assistance that he derived in his editorial task was from the note-book of Lord Palmerston." The trait nicely corresponds with what we know of the character of the Temple family on the one hand, and of Lord Palmerston on the other. The young lord who sits in the class-room of a Scottish University, sedate and vigilant, jotting down the words of Dugald Stewart, to be copied out and conned over in the evening, has formed an eminently practical idea of his position, and has the faculty of taking pains. We do not hear that Lord Palmerston distinguished himself in the Speculative Society. His name was on its books, but he was not frequent in his attendance, and does not seem to have been one of the speakers. We are justified in regarding the circumstance as not accidental. He was probably slow of speech, being in fact considered in the House of Commons, twenty years later, a hesitating speaker. But he made no earnest effort to attain to oratorical fluency, and bent his energies to more solid acquirement. The event proved that the basis thus laid for a political career admitted of a stabler and loftier superstructure than could have been reared on a foundation of mere linguistic volubility. The silent Palmerston lived to perform more substantial services for England, to write his name more deeply in the history of Europe, and to acquire a far higher place in the estimation of his countrymen, than Brougham, Horner, or any other of the orators who, about that period, made the hall of the Speculative Society resound with their eloquence.

Lord Palmerston entered Parliament in 1806, taking his seat for the pocket borough of Bletchingley. He was then twenty-two years old, and he continued a member of the House of Commons almost without intermission until he was fourscore.* He was for some years a listener and observer only. He first spoke in February, 1806, defending Ministers for sending an expedition to Copenhagen to seize the Danish fleet. The speech is brief, and is remarkable for nothing so much as the simplicity and breadth of its reasoning, and the total absence of rhetorical brilliancy. "England," he said, "according to that law of self-preservation which is a fundamental principle of the law of nations, is justified in securing, and therefore enforcing, from Denmark a neutrality which France would by compulsion have converted into an active hostility." No refining or special pleading here; none of the flourish or verbosity of aspiring youth; the right thing said quietly, briefly, clearly, and there an end.

He proved himself an excellent official. He had the Temple knack of doing things quickly and gracefully, moving obstacles pleasantly out of his way, and making his superiors and his brother officials feel that it was easy to get along with him. There are men of astonishing power and the best intentions who have not the gift of working with others. Lord Brougham was one of these. It would have been easier for him to perform the work of the whole team than to pull in harness. He was always doing something which fretted his colleagues, and at last he drove them to despair. Confessedly the first orator, and the most impetuous and crushing genius, of the Whigs, he was pronounced insufferable by his allies and thrown for ever out of Cabinet arrangements. Forty years in the political Coventry rewarded Brougham's eccentric activity and uproarious zeal. The quiet, handy Palmerston, after being for a couple of years a Junior Lord of the Admiralty, was promoted to the Secretaryship of War, and administration after administration continued to value his services. Perceval, Liverpool, Canning, Goderich, Wellington, found him the kind of man they wanted. A silent member, or nearly so, but recommended to practical ministers by eloquent efficiency.

It was a time when England wanted in all departments men who could work; and when, after long bawling and many reverses, the world was to be convinced that the ancient working talent of the nation was not extinct. The question of peace or war was no longer an open question. It might have been bad policy to go to war with the French Republic, but no candid inquirer will refuse to admit that, in the

* It is somewhat remarkable that, from the very commencement of his parliamentary career, he was in office. A modest intelligence, a frank yet unassuming demeanour, a college reputation, not for brilliant but for useful qualities, probably recommended him to the heads as one likely to do much work and to give little trouble. At the age of twenty-three he was gazetted as Junior Lord of the Admiralty in the administration of the Duke of Portland.

epic struggle between Great Britain and the French Emperor, our national independence was at stake. An energetic war policy was imposed upon all Cabinets by the necessity of the case, and as the Tory party had made this policy its own, it was supported by a unanimous and enthusiastic people, and drew to its ranks an overwhelming majority of young and ardent spirits. At sea the British flag had been completely victorious, but Napoleon had received no serious check on land. The tide of military success was near the turn when Lord Palmerston became Secretary of War. Many causes,—the efforts of many able men,—conspired to effect the change which ensued. It would be possible to exaggerate the importance, in relation to the general result, of Lord Palmerston's vigorous administration of the War Office; but it was a necessity of his situation that he should feel himself in the front of England's battle during that stirring time, and share the emotions which, between 1809 and 1815, thrilled in wave after wave of intense excitement along the surface of the United Kingdom. In those years the deepest political education of Lord Palmerston took place. He became proud of England. He became proud of the name of Englishman. He learned to believe in the tight little island about which the last generation loved to sing. He learned to trust and to extol the prowess of his country. He came to the War Office when the thin red lines of British infantry were beginning to score the Napoleonic map of Europe. He witnessed the trepidation of the London merchants when that headstrong young soldier, Sir Arthur Wellesley, thinking, forsooth, that because he had given good account of a parcel of blacks at Assaye, he was the man to try conclusions with the demon of the impossible, the invincible Emperor, whose sword-flash from Austerlitz had struck the heaven-born Pitt into pallid death, dared to face the imperial soldiery. Year after year Palmerston heard the trumpets of victory sounded, until the crowning mercy, as Cromwell would have said, of Waterloo. At that date the British soldier was in fact accepted as the Hercules of the world. The impressions of that period never left Lord Palmerston. He had no idea of England playing a second part, giving the lead to France, Russia, or whatever Power it might be. In the strength of England's arm all Englishmen, including the Tories with whom Lord Palmerston acted, then believed; but he did not confine himself to the old Tory circle of opinions; he believed in the almost miraculous virtue of constitutional freedom on the English pattern. English at all points, he had faith in England's ideas. His theory was that mind rules the world; that nations of high moral character, guided by an intelligent public opinion acting through the machinery of representative institutions, exert an influence out of proportion to their material force; and that England, the most enlightened of kingdoms, ought to wield a power indefinitely greater than that of her mere physical force. He was thus the complete and superb realisation of Mr. Matthew Arnold's

political Philistine. "There is in nature,"—the words are Lord Palmerston's,—“no governing power but mind: all else is passive and inert. In human affairs this power is opinion; in political affairs it is public opinion; and he who can grasp this power, with it will subdue the fleshy arm of physical strength, and compel it to work out his purpose. Look at one of those floating fortresses which bear to the furthest regions of the globe the glory and the prowess of England: see a puny insect at the helm, commanding the winds of heaven and the waves of the ocean, and enslaving even the laws of nature, as if, instead of being ordained to hold the universe together, they had only been established for his particular occasion. And yet the merest breath of those winds which he has yoked to his service, the merest drop of that fathomless abyss which he has made into his own footstool, would, if ignorantly encountered, be more than enough for his destruction: but the powers of his mind have triumphed over the forces of things, and the subjugated elements have become his obedient vassals.” The enlightened Englishman, in Lord Palmerston's view of things, was the helmsman of the vessel of the world. We now smile at this faith. But the old faith in England was not the faith of fools. Men of brains held it, more than one or two. Macaulay professed it, and he was a sensible man, a Whig, the ornament of a party whose genius consisted in superiority to the illusions of genius. Earl Russell has it, and certain of the formulas in which the constitutional Earl has embodied it, after being watchwords for a quarter of a century, are pronounced with an ironical tone by the new generation. Lord Palmerston had it perhaps most of all, though he made little parade of it. It was a cheerful faith. We are not much happier for having lost it. We are statistical and business-like, not enthusiastic, not in the least inclined to boast. We send out an expedition to Abyssinia, knock over Theodore, bring home the prisoners, and say nothing about it. No statesman could have ventured, in referring to the expedition, to talk of the majesty of England, and of the glory of making the *civis Britannicus* as inviolable as the *civis Romanus*, which Lord Palmerston actually did in connection with the oppressions of Greek Otho so recently as 1850. Within very recent times our national mood has been perceptibly changing,—bettering, we shall try to hope. A patriotism, however, that is only partly intelligent may be better than none, and no commonwealth can be in a healthful condition when the citizen takes no pride in the State. The swagger, the fanfaronade, the loquacious optimism of the Regency, were the bad side of a good thing. Cosmopolitan cynicism is a far more barren affair.

Hitherto Lord Palmerston had been a Tory, and to the last day of his life he continued to think and feel on the questions which came before him in the war-time as he did when he fought Napoleon in the War Office. But his mind was essentially of the growing kind, and

it was not in his nature to pause at a particular point, to decide that the pinnacle of perfection was now attained, and to lay an absolute veto upon further change. With that felicity of speech which was among the more marked of his characteristics, he spoke once of "the private vanity of consistency of opinion." The question, he would have said, was not whether you had a right to change, but whether you changed honestly or dishonestly. "Public men," he daringly remarked, "may change their opinions upon questions of great public importance without any other motive than an honourable, I will say a noble regard for their country's good." Partly from the modesty of his intelligence, partly from his comprehensive sympathy, he regarded with a feeling akin to reverence the reigning sentiment of nations. He signalled, as the fatal mistake of the administration which placed itself in opposition to parliamentary reform, "a belief that the firm and steady determination of a few men in power could bear down the opinions of the many, and stifle the feelings of mankind." The minds of some men, generally clever and precocious men, become, in the years of early manhood, and continue through life, a carefully-arranged cabinet of fixed ideas, precise opinions, particular facts. These men speak well, act with propriety, but are felt to want power. The capital account, so to speak, in their mental establishment is closed; and though they do a regular, creditable, comfortable business, they never leave the beaten track of their operations,—they never achieve anything superlative,—they eschew failure, but they attain no splendid or original success. There is something feminine in this order of mind; it is characteristic of superior women to believe in the sacredness of formulas, to love a precise, dignified, well-mannered, well-dressed virtue. A man thinks it right to have a general disposition in favour of paying his bills, nay, to have an inflexible intention to pay them when he can; a woman frets if an amount due on Monday is not paid until Thursday. Of a similar nature, in the political sphere, is the character commonly assigned to the Whigs. "Le Whig," said Balzac, with wicked shrewdness, "*est la femme de votre gouvernement.*" The Whig was for exact demarcations, ten-pound lines,—beyond that the deluge. Finality was his word. Within his limits he was the most useful and practical of men; lucid, prompt, sagacious, intrepid; beyond his limits he would not venture, he would not look. A man of principles, rather than of principle; imperfectly imbued with that principle of principles, to keep heart and eye open, to be growing and going. He "walked by averaged precepts." He did not feel the supremacy of the present, or draw his inspiration from "full vision of the moment's worth." Among our public men at this moment the strongest contrast presented to the characteristically Whig intellect is presented by Mr. Gladstone. It is of comparatively slight importance where such a man starts. His life is a progress; and he is sure to leave behind him men of the finality

type who, at the outset, were far ahead. Lord Palmerston had not Mr. Gladstone's temperament of genius, his fervour, his impetuosity, his passion; in originaive power he was deficient even when tried by the low standard which ought to be applied to practical statesmen; but the vivacity, openness, courage, and sympathy of his mind insured his being in the foremost ranks of political progress, and made it a necessity for him to leave his party if his party lagged behind the most cultivated and energetic intelligence of the time. The war had scarcely ended when differences began to arise between him and the Tories,—differences which increased in number and importance until he found himself in the Liberal ranks.

The settlement of 1815 was never to his mind. The European struggle with Napoleon he had looked upon as a struggle of nations for freedom, not as a mere coalition of despots to put down one who insisted upon being master of all. The Treaty of Vienna embodied a policy of reaction and repression,—a policy hostile to the reasonable demands and honourable aspirations of peoples. It is indeed unjust to launch into invective against the Vienna plenipotentiaries, or to accuse them of deliberate injustice. Not only did they act in a general way for the best, but the circumstances of their position were such that they could hardly have been expected to do much better than they did. For twenty years the Continent had been convulsed with wars,—the rivers of Europe ran blood,—the human family, in the most civilised territories of the world, was decimated. These calamities were directly traceable to the excesses of revolutionists who called themselves apostles of freedom. Not unnaturally, not culpably, though most erroneously, even intelligent men learned to think of liberty as "a Fury slinging flame." According to a stern law of nature, the good was discredited by the evil which masqueraded in its name. Throughout the whole of the earlier part of this century, whenever there was a movement of genuine life and harmonious freedom in a nation, observers shuddered and recoiled as if they already beheld the murderous axes of September, or heard the crowds that raved and sang around the guillotine. The statesmen who arranged the Vienna treaty could think of no better way to avert a recurrence of the calamities which had their source in the French Revolution than to fall back, as nearly as possible, on the old arrangements. It was a poor plan. It is easy to improve upon it now. Looking into the crater of a volcano which has spent its force, we may trace the course of the lava-flood, and discern with easy precision that a particular rock, round which the surges eddied harmlessly, would have been a position of safety; but when the air burnt like a furnace, and day was obscured with smoke, and the ground shook as with earthquake, the act of cool and steady observation was more difficult. Lord Palmerston was perhaps aware of this at the time, but he saw the defects of the settlement, and adopted the

more liberal foreign policy which was gradually propounded by Canning. Fifteen years after the treaty of Vienna was signed, he referred in terms of lofty reprobation to the conduct of the European sovereigns on the occasion. The words are not only characteristic in respect of style, but derive importance from the light they throw upon the character and motives of Lord Palmerston's foreign policy in what may be called the second stage of his career. His political creed during the war-time was summed up in hostility to Napoleon. His foreign policy, for the last twenty-five years of his life, consisted in opposition to the aggrandisement of Russia. His policy in the intervening stage is indicated in the following sentences:—"When Bonaparte was to be dethroned, the sovereigns of Europe called up their people to their aid; they invoked them in the sacred names of freedom and national independence; the cry went forth throughout Europe; and those whom subsidies had no power to buy, and conscriptions no force to compel, roused by the magic sound of constitutional rights, started spontaneously into arms. The long-suffering nations of Europe rose as one man, and by an effort tremendous and wide-spreading, like a great convulsion of nature, they hurled the conqueror from his throne. But promises made in the days of distress were forgotten in the hour of triumph, and the events of that period furnish an additional proof—

‘How soon

Height will recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feigned submission swore; how ease recall
Vows made in pain, as violent as void.’

The rulers of mankind, like the Persian fisherman, had set free a gigantic spirit from its iron prison; but when that spirit had done their bidding, they shrunk back with alarm from the vastness of that power which they themselves had set in action, and modestly requested it would go down again into its former dungeon."

Between a politician holding these sentiments and statesmen of the Castlereagh school there came naturally into view an ever-widening incompatibility. Palmerston followed the lead of Canning, that brilliant and high-principled genius whose death cut short a career which might have been more splendid than that of any statesman of the century. It was the misfortune of Canning that his most ardent expressions of political enthusiasm were associated with causes about which generous and hopeful minds were once enthusiastic, but which have conspicuously failed to meet the expectations of mankind. The most fiery Liberal has now no difficulty in commanding his feelings on the subject of the kingdom of Greece or the Republics of South America. But Greece was once a name to conjure with in England, a name to conjure such spirits as Byron, who, though a poet, was one of the shrewdest of men. Thousands of English youth, commanded by half-pay officers whom the close of the war had

thrown out of employment, trooped off to fight for the South American Republics, and Lord Palmerston stated in the House of Commons that the English people had embarked not less than £150,000,000 in loans and other undertakings for their advantage. This enthusiasm was sound while it lasted, and may be taken as the pulse-beat of the English people in unison with what was then best and most promising in the movements of the world. The high estimate formed of Canning by Lord Palmerston is an important testimony in favour of the former. Had he been the showy and superficial man he is sometimes represented to have been, Palmerston would have seen through him. To have inspired with an affection amounting to devotion, and an esteem amounting to reverence, one whose faculty was entirely for work, and who, in close observation of Wellington and Peel, might have learned to know a man when he saw him, would have been impossible for Canning, unless he had possessed something of greatness, both intellectual and moral. "If ever there was a man," said Lord Palmerston, when taxed with departing from the opinions of Canning on the question of Reform, "if ever there was a man who took great and enlarged views of human affairs, that man was Mr. Canning; if ever there was a man who, as it were, polarised his opinions by universal and all-pervading principles of action, that man was undoubtedly Mr. Canning; and when our assailants on this question would endeavour to pin down his gigantic mind by the Lilliputian threads of verbal quotation, I repudiate in his name the conclusions which they would draw; and I feel convinced that if he had been standing here now, his mighty genius would have embraced within its comprehensive grasp all the various necessities upon which our own conclusions have been founded, and that he would in all probability have stated to the House,—with powers, alas! how different from those of any man within those walls,—the same opinions which I venture to submit." He concluded by citing the very noble saying of Canning, worthy of the highest type of constitutional statesmen, "They who resist improvement because it is innovation may find themselves compelled to accept innovation when it has ceased to be improvement."

If the mind of Palmerston was not a cabinet of pattern opinions on what has been deemed peculiarly the Whig model, still less was it imbued with the peculiar idealisms of the high Tory faith. That imaginative and dreamy enthusiasm which, for aristocratic poets of tender age, silvers with fine lustre, like that shed by moonbeams on the crumbling walls and silent aisles of some cathedral ruin, the institutions of the past, had no power over his thoroughly clear and thoroughly modern intellect. By whatever name they might call themselves, the Whigs of those days could not but draw him towards them by the spell of a strong natural affinity. His acute perception, his penetrating sense, his genius for business and

practical life, led him in the direction of that lightly-equipped, but adroit and resolute band, in which Brougham, Horner, Sydney Smith, and Jeffrey fought, and from which there poured into the camp of the Eldons and Castlereaghs a ceaseless shower of arrows, winged with wit and pointed with keenest sense, which vexed them as the shafts of Phœbus Apollo vexed the Greeks, and gave their favourite maxims to be a prey to dogs and birds. During their long period of exclusion from office the Whigs had learned wisdom. The commercial principles of Adam Smith, the principles of toleration preached by Locke and his followers, had been grasped by their clear and vigorous intellects. They preached a political gospel new in those days,—the gospel of common sense; and they possessed a grand element of political power in the idea that the time had come for introducing the middle class to a preponderant share in the government of the country. Palmerston gradually saw that these men were in the right. The special work to be done when he entered public life was to wrest from the hand of Napoleon that sword which he had vowed never to sheathe except in the heart of England. The special work to be done when the century had entered its second quarter was to clear away a heap of legislative rubbish, the accumulation of many years, and to adopt into the national system the sound political views which, in their period of enforced leisure, had been acquired by the Whigs. On the question of Roman Catholic Emancipation he definitely parted company with his old friends, and the debates which heralded the Reform Bill saw him in opposition. In 1830 he took office in the Liberal Cabinet of Lord Grey, accepting, for the first time, the portfolio of Foreign Affairs.

When Lord Palmerston approached fifty years of age, his sentiments ceased to be Conservative, and became Liberal. As Canning grew in years and experience, the same process took place. In Peel a transformation essentially identical had been proceeding for some time previous to his death. Mr. Gladstone is a conspicuous example of a similar change. Is not this beginning with Toryism and ending with Liberalism, in the case of so many able and high-minded men, a significant circumstance? These were the greatest of the Tories, the men of whom Tories were proud. No unstable youngsters they, who, having from family associations or traditions fallen into the Tory ranks, deserted the flag at the dictation of wilfulness or the prompting of caprice. In every instance the Toryism declined as the faculties strengthened and the experience matured. At the time of life when, imagination veils its fires and audacity is cooled down into prudence, these commanding intellects became convinced that there was safety, not peril,—advantage, not loss,—in going forward. They perceived that the foundations of national prosperity in Great Britain are too deeply fixed to be shaken by the execution of repairs in the superincumbent edifice. They probably saw that the character

of the English people is so profoundly conservative that the chance of their going too fast is greatly less than the chance of their going too slow. "So hard is it," said Lord Palmerston, in the debate on the Reform Bill introduced by Lord John Russell on the 1st of March, 1831, "to bring this nation to consent to great and important changes, that some of those measures which impartial posterity will stamp with the mint-mark of purest wisdom and most unalloyed good, have only been wrung from the reluctant consent of England after long and toilsome years of protracted discussion." The words, uttered by Lord Palmerston after being for a quarter of a century in the House, have an almost oracular value. If ever man knew England, it was he. Universally recognised as the most English of Englishmen, he was conscious of having in his own bosom that dislike of change which is with the English a second nature. But the fruit of his consideration and of his experience was a conviction that this instinct, salutary in its place, and the mark of a grave, majestic people, might be too much deferred to, and might lead to the rejection or undue postponement of measures of "purest wisdom and unalloyed good." Seldom have words been uttered which deserve to be more deeply pondered by practical men.

It was as Foreign Minister of Great Britain that the fame of Lord Palmerston filled the world. Until the last few years of his life, the nature of his policy was generally misunderstood. Distracted by the clamour of his assailants, the virulence of his detractors, the furious outcry and disappointment of extreme men of all parties, the body of his countrymen did not, until very late, know him sufficiently to trust him. For about a quarter of a century he heard himself constantly called a firebrand, and frequently a traitor. The despot and the revolutionist gnashed their teeth upon him from opposite sides. In point of fact, there was no inconsistency in his conduct, and, with his career before us as a whole, there is no difficulty in understanding it. He was in no sense a transcendent or superlative man. It did not lie in the Temple strain to be so. He was never raised above himself by transports of enthusiasm, and he was incapable of the magnificent audacities and the dazzling enterprises which have their inspiration in genius. He deplored the fall of Poland, but, comparing means with ends, balancing the certain calamities of a European war against the barely possible resuscitation of Poland, measuring the combined force of Russia, Prussia, and Austria against that of France, England, and the Poles, he decided that the hazard was too great to justify armed intervention. "It would not," these were his words, "have been judicious for the British Government to have taken a step which must have led to a general war, in the hope and expectation of rescuing Poland from destruction." Lord Palmerston was no crusader. He believed in political facts, he did not count upon political miracles; and only by a political miracle could an inde-

pendent Poland have been maintained by the Western Powers against the whole force of northern and eastern Europe. Though in this, however, and in similar cases, Lord Palmerston decided against armed intervention, he did not assume an attitude of sullen and embittered neutrality, or abstain from remonstrance because he could not fight. If expression of opinion could do little, still that little was worth the trouble it cost. Silent, sullen dignity never commended itself to his mind. The opinion of England he regarded as an element of real power in the councils of the world, and he was determined that it at least should be unmistakably on the side of justice. "If by interference," he once said, "is meant intermeddling, and intermeddling in every way and to every extent short of actual military force, then I must affirm that there is nothing in such interference which the laws of nations may not in certain cases permit." It is easy to sneer at this as a policy of talk without action, of bark without bite, of playing the lion's part by force of roaring without aid from tooth or claw. In the hands of a feeble or fussy minister, this would be about the net result of the matter. Injustice, sword in hand, is not to be lectured into propriety. "Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour?" True, all true; and yet, if you survey considerable periods, you will find that the decrees of intelligent opinion throughout the civilised world have not been void of effect. Greece, Belgium, Italy, the very mention of their names renders further proof upon the point superfluous. The spiritual and the material powers are associated in these times of ripe civilisation by ties of affinity so subtle and untraceable that he must have a keen vision who will say where their co-operation is impossible. In no case can it be wrong to let opinion have full play. Such was the maxim which commended itself to the broad sense of Lord Palmerston, and we may pronounce it a right maxim.

But it were injustice to him to admit that he shrank from war because war is dangerous. A disposition to browbeat the weak and cower to the strong was not likely to be either acquired or encouraged in the War Office during the Peninsular War and the Hundred Days. It was, indeed, his fate to deal much with foes like King Otho and Mandarin Yeh. "Shame!" cried impatient persons; "leave these little fellows alone. It does not become England to wave her sword of sharpness over field-mice." All very fine; but if the small creatures are intolerably insolent, intolerably mischievous and malignant, is their insignificance to be their protection? In Lord Palmerston's interminable bickering with King Otho, the Greek authorities were perversely, persistently, insufferably in the wrong. In the face of a strong prejudice against him, with Parliament and country alike disposed to condemn his proceedings, Lord Palmerston stated his whole case, and from the day when his great speech on the Greek question was uttered,

opinion has been in his favour. If an ill-conditioned boy breaks windows or cuts down young fruit-trees, is he to escape punishment because he is a little one? Lord Palmerston told people to let alone vague generalities and look at particular facts, and when they looked they saw that there were really no two sides to the question. It is not true that he was afraid to engage in hostilities with formidable antagonists. By his prompt and decided action in the Levant, he thwarted at one blow the designs of Russia, France, and Mehemet Ali. His contest with Nicholas of Russia was a duel of Titans. It was not by cunning talk or judicious bluster that Lord Palmerston triumphed in that long war, of which the campaign in the Crimea was but the closing scene. The victor did not lack for courage; depend upon that. Lord Palmerston's victory was complete and final. When Nicholas died in March, 1855, having just lived to see Lord Palmerston Prime Minister of England, the scheme of Russian aggrandisement, against which the latter had struggled for thirty years, was hopelessly in ruins. His ideas on the subject of Russian aggression, as upon all subjects, were definite and clear. "For a long period of time," he said, in explaining the object of the Crimean war, "it has been the standing policy of Russia to endeavour to weaken and crumble down, and ultimately to appropriate, Turkey as her own possession. As has been openly avowed of late, this was the policy of Peter, of Catherine, of Alexander, of Nicholas; and it was this settled policy of Russia which, breaking out on a particular occasion in a manner which rendered further passiveness impossible, drove this country into a war for just and necessary results. . . . The purpose of the war is the protection and defence of Turkey, not simply on account of any sympathy which we may feel for Turkey as an independent State, but because the balance of power in Europe,—an expression which involves the greatest interests of the civilised world,—is concerned in preventing the colossal power of Russia from extending over those wide and important territories." The soundness of these views has been called in question, and that by men of name and authority. But Lord Palmerston was not the victim of a heated imagination, influenced by vague alarm; and no statesman has lived in Europe for a hundred years better qualified to form a judgment upon this point. Of sympathy with "infidel Turks," in contradistinction to Christian Greeks, he was as guiltless as any of his countrymen. He had strenuously and successfully endeavoured to secure for Greece an advantageous frontier-line in settling with Turkey. But the fact was patent to him that, if Turkey disappeared, Greece could offer no serious resistance to Russia, and the whole of the east of Europe would be Russianised. The triumph of Russia over Turkey in Europe would have involved the absorption into Russia of the vast territories possessed by Turkey in Asia. In that case it would have been for England

to choose, between engaging in a life-and-death struggle with Russia on the plains of Egypt, and seeing the gates of India locked before her face. The balance of power in Europe may be called an abstraction, or sneered at as a systematic attempt to keep Providence in the right. But there is no scheme of policy which is not in some sense an abstraction; and there is neither unreason nor irreverence in saying that man is the instrument whereby Providence works in human affairs. A Bismarck of the North, bringing into the military system of Russia, say, twenty millions of a population specially available for warlike purposes, would not have promoted European tranquillity. It is by no means sure that our younger statesmen ought to look upon these views of Lord Palmerston as obsolete.

The antagonist of Russia, the steady advocate of free institutions, Lord Palmerston was cordially detested by the reactionary and absolutist party throughout Europe. Sir John Bowring mentions a circumstance bearing on this point which, unless we had it on the authority of his eyesight, we should have pronounced incredible. "I was at the Court of Berlin," says Sir John Bowring, "in 1838. A despatch arrived—it turned out to be a false announcement; but it reported the death of Palmerston. The late king was there. He seized the paper, and absolutely danced with joy in the presence of a large assembly as he announced the glad tidings, congratulating himself and the whole company on an event so auspicious." The revolutionists of 1848, on the other hand, and wild men of all shades on that side of the question, were equally offended with him. The stupid German couplet which admits of literal translation into the following English lines—

"If the devil has a son,
Sure enough he's Palmerston,"

is imputed by Sir John Bowring to the German aristocrats, and by the late Mr. Edward Whitty to the German Reds; and it is possible that both authorities are correct. In all cases Palmerston was a little behind the foremost, and yet well ahead of the laggards. Those before cried "Forward," and those behind cried "Back." Regarding neither cry, he kept on the even tenor of his way. There were men who denounced him as a fanatical opponent of Russia; there were men who for many years pestered the public with demonstrations that he was Russia's purchased tool. Aristotle would have pronounced him the realised ideal, the express and perfect incarnation, of that virtue which dwells in the golden mean. Even his affections were tranquil and steady-footed. It is understood that, in early manhood, he was the lover of Lord Melbourne's sister, who passed him by and bestowed her hand upon Earl Cowper. He did not break his heart. He did not find it necessary to his peace to eradicate his liking. Many years afterwards, when the lady became a widow, he was prepared to renew his attentions. They were favourably received; his

marriage took place when he was fifty-five years old ; but he was as tender and chivalrous in his affection as if he had been the youthful lover of a youthful bride. A fine equilibrium reigned among his faculties, and he exhibited in harmonious association a variety of choice qualities rarely found together. His temper was not only negatively good,—it had a positive power of sweetening annoyances and lightening work. He could hit hard, and loved a stand-up fight, but he could not steadily hate any one. He knew no affronts which were unpardonable, no quarrels which could not be arranged. Light-hearted as Maurepas, yet methodic as Peel,—adroit and versatile as Calonne, yet a match at figures for Joseph Hume,—vivacious as Disraeli, yet with a Gladstonian capacity for toil,—he presented a combination which we shall not soon see again. The thing he could least endure was the affectation,—perhaps we should say also the reality,—of a rigidly pure and scrupulous virtue. A man too conscientious to put secret-service money to its natural uses,—who frowned decorously when a despatch was trimmed and reeased to suit the weather-signs of debate,—who could see no particular difference between the artful suppressions and simulated arguments of partisan warfare and downright lying,—irritated him almost to fierceness. Had he been one of the sons of Jacob, he would have winced angrily under the airs of superiority assumed by Joseph,—would have been irreverently witty on the subject of his dreams,—would have called him a shabby fellow for telling tales on his brethren, and might even have lent him a sly kick when he was thrown into the pit ;—but he would have been the first to relent, and would never have consented to the bargain with the Ishmaelites. Transcendent in no respect, he was not transcendent in moral earnestness, and he will not be classed by posterity among the world's great men ; but for a more felicitously-adjusted nature you may search history in vain. Not Goethe, not Sir Walter Scott, not the prince of all healthy men, Shakspeare himself, was more genially vital, more unaffectedly and gracefully strong. His fund of health,—using that grand word in all the comprehensiveness of its meaning,—was inexhaustible. He was not one of your fiery men whose veins run lightning, whose existence is a succession of agitations, who consume themselves away in a few years of radiancy and conflagration. Always interested,—capable of being infinitely amused,—touching life at a myriad points,—he was, nevertheless, always self-possessed, and knew not those fiery moments which draw most severely on the physical and mental powers. He continued fresh and boy-hearted to the last. Never vehement, never intense, he had his faculties well in hand, and did not wear them out. He was always ready. What in other men would have required a special effort of concentration cost him no exertion. The star of Almack's, the darling of society, he could step quietly into his office at any hour of the evening, and commence the dictation of a despatch

with a composure as perfect as if the whole of the preceding day had been occupied in preparation for it. Much of all this was of course due to a fine bodily constitution, but Lord Palmerston's comprehensive healthfulness was also in great part moral. He was a singularly unselfish man. His estimate of himself was nobly modest, and he was always disposed to think that he had got his deserts, and had not been unfairly treated. For about fifteen years,—half the life-time of a generation,—he was the subject of constant attack in some of the most influential journals in England; but he never thought of reviling the press,—he never for a moment lost his temper,—he never fancied there were combinations or conspiracies against him, or fell into any other of the delusions of brooding, egotistic, and monomaniacal personages. You could not make him unhappy, for nothing could tempt him into baseness or malignity. This moral soundness was, perhaps, the deepest and most enviable of all the characteristics of Lord Palmerston.

"Ink," it has been said, "ran in the veins of all these Temples." Lord Palmerston had decided literary tendencies, and his power as a writer and speaker was singularly in unison with the other capacities and qualities of his mind. "The most remarkable characteristic in my opinion," said Mr. Gladstone once of Lord Palmerston's oratory, "distinguishing it beyond that of all other men, was the degree in which he said precisely the thing he meant to say." This is finely and perfectly true. If it is possible to have a genius for perspicuity in language, that genius belonged to Lord Palmerston. With the exactitude of a mathematical diagram he said all he meant to say, and avoided going one hair's-breadth beyond his meaning. It does not surprise us to hear that he was a purist in language, grammar, and orthography, and sensitive in the matter of quotations. He was one of a society, of which Sheridan, Canning, Frere, and others were members, formed for the purpose of improving the English language. The plan was that the members should give dinners in turn, the conversation to be, we presume, upon the object of the association, and the toasts to be proposed in pattern English. It was at the dinner which Sheridan gave that the waiters were bailiffs, and Lord Palmerston used to say that he was struck with the frequency with which these extemporised attendants appealed to "Mr. Sheridan." "And did you,"—such was the question naturally suggested,—"*improve the language?*" "Not certainly," replied his lordship, "at that dinner; for Sheridan got drunk, and a good many words of doubtful propriety were employed." On one occasion Lord Palmerston was himself attacked on the point of correctness in language. In the last speech from the throne which he ever dictated,—he was then above eighty,—Her Majesty is made to say that she has great satisfaction in "*recurring again*" to her Parliament. Objection was taken by literary men on the ground that this expression is tautological. After an eleven-

o'clock dinner the criticism was mentioned to Lord Palmerston. He warmly defended the phrase; and next morning, before ten, the objector received a note in his handwriting, with authorities to prove that the word "recur" may be used in the sense of "have recourse to," and that it is correct to say that you have recourse to advice on successive occasions. In his first parliamentary period he engaged in literary pleasantries, mildly satirical, with Canning. The fun and fire of the "New Whig Guide" are weak in comparison with those of the "Anti-Jacobin" by which it was preceded. A flavour as of the lightest wine still lingers about the "Guide," and we can just read, with a perceptible effort, Lord Palmerston's elaborate joke, occupying many pages, in form of a trial of Henry Brougham for having called his parliamentary chief, Lord Ponsonby, an old woman. The jury return a verdict of guilty against the prisoner, but he is recommended to mercy on the ground of having "vilified the Prince Regent." Palmerston did not affect the character of parliamentary wit, but a twinkle of bright humour hovered about his eye and brow, and in light raillery he was admirable. Nothing could be finer in its way than what he said of that notable attempt at legislation for India made by Mr. Disraeli, which was to confer power to elect Indian Councillors upon Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham. "Whenever," said Lord Palmerston, "a man met a friend in the street, he found him in an uncontrollable fit of laughter; and as soon as he was able to speak and explain himself, it turned out that he was laughing at India Bill No. 2." This was so nearly the literal state of the case, that the fun of the remark was irresistible.

Modest in his estimate of himself, content with the measure of fame and of fortune which had fallen to his lot, claiming no recognition or reward, Lord Palmerston might never have come to the front if a special conjuncture of circumstances had not led his countrymen to find him out. When we were at war with Russia, and when the nation, after trying statesman after statesman, continued in the distressing consciousness that the administration lacked vigour, the man who, for a quarter of a century, had been checkmating the policy of Russia was naturally called for. In no spirit of confidence or enthusiasm,—feeling clearly that others had failed, but by no means certain that the right man was yet discovered,—England said, "Try Palmerston." It was on the 8th of February, 1855, that the Earl of Derby withdrew, and that he took the helm. On the 16th he explained his position to the House. Already all the machinery of an energetic administration was at work, and as the new Prime Minister glanced at department after department, detailing what had been done and what was planned, members felt that a new spirit of energy was already penetrating the framework of Government. The country looked on in hope, beginning to breathe more freely. Month after month went by; month after month the public watched.

Troubles came at first in threatening battalions upon the ministry; but the practical instinct of the nation gradually decided that Palmerston was the man to whom the business of the war could be committed, and in whose hands the name of England was safe. It was astonishing with what ease he held the reins at that noisy time, and with what lightness and self-possession he encountered the obstacles in his path. In May the Opposition made a determined attempt to unseat him, and a long and stormy debate took place. Mr. Disraeli, anxious to avail himself of the uneasy and discontented feeling which still widely prevailed, and to make the most of the inarticulate shouting of a number of ill-informed people who called themselves Administrative Reformers, moved a resolution to the effect that the language of Her Majesty's Government was "ambiguous and uncertain." The Opposition maintained the attack with spirit and animosity, and the men below the gangway on the Liberal side, in whose eyes Lord Palmerston never found favour, kept up a raking fire of argument, taunt, and invective. Mr. Disraeli closed the attack in one of his most impassioned philippics. One can still see him with the mind's eye as his sentences rang through the House, his right arm coming down with fierce emphasis at each rhetorical close, while he asked, in impetuous torrent of interrogatives, whether the Prime Minister had not done this, that, and the other evil thing? It was beautiful to observe Lord Palmerston sitting in fixed and placid attention, cool as an old admiral cut out of oak, the figure-head of a seventy-four gun ship in a Biscay squall. At last, as the hours of morning stole on, he placed his hat quietly on the table, and, amid the intense excitement of the House, sprang to his feet. Not a shade of agitation or anxiety could you trace on that brave, clear, splendidly intelligent face. The forehead, broad and expansive, the eye frank, fearless, and sparkling, the whole countenance radiant with energy, courage, good temper, spoke assurance to his party and defiance to the Opposition. He had got into the heart of his subject, —eleven and a half columns of Hansard had been spoken,—when the cry of "Black Rod" echoed through the House, and the usher who rejoices in that mysterious title summoned the Commons to the bar of the Lords, to receive Her Majesty's assent by commission to certain bills. Lord Palmerston was interrupted; the Speaker left the chair, and, with as many of the members as chose to accompany him, proceeded to the Upper House. After a while the Speaker returned, and Lord Palmerston resumed. "I think,"—these were his first words,—“I have some reason to complain of the impatience of the other House in not waiting for the censure which the right honourable gentleman opposite is desirous of inflicting, but in prematurely administering the rod.” The Opposition, joining in the titter which ran along every bench, learned that the tempest they had so passionately raised had agitated the mind of Lord Palmerston

to no greater extent than was consistent with its wafting towards them a jest so feather-light as this. The next second he was grappling with the arguments of his opponents, and in one or two minutes all recollection of the interruption had passed from the memory of the House. His speech may be pronounced one of the noblest ever uttered in Parliament. Simple, manly, luminous, convincing, high in tone and unanswerable in reasoning, it told upon the intellect not only of Parliament, not only of England, but of the civilised world. Some of its sentences deserve to be remembered. "I feel that, in whatever hands the Government is placed, the will of the country must and will be obeyed. I know that will is that England, having engaged in a war necessary and just, in concert with our great ally and neighbour, France, must and shall succeed." From the moment he was Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston felt that he held a trust higher than the interests of party, and not in the utmost fervour of debate, not in the most unguarded moment of social converse, could an expression pass his lips which, in discrediting his adversaries, cast a slur upon the name of England. In a still loftier tone, one seldom assumed by Lord Palmerston, and never except in a spirit of deep reverence and sincerity, is the following: "The fate of battle is in the hands of a Higher Power. It is not in our power to command success, but it is enough for us to do all in our power to obtain it. That we have done. In a cause which we consider to be just, necessary, and honourable, we confidently place our trust in a Higher Power." Mr. Disraeli was beaten by a majority of one hundred, and the Government confirmed in the hands of Lord Palmerston.

From that night he was a kind of monarch in England. We learned to call him Old Pam, and to love him better than any Prime Minister was ever loved throughout the three kingdoms. All parties in the House took to him. It was pleasant to sit under his parliamentary government, and though there were Liberals more liberal than he, and Conservatives more conservative, the majority both of Liberals and Conservatives secretly preferred him to their special chiefs. He had not the slowness and heavy decorum of Earl Russell; he did not startle country gentlemen with extravagances, paradoxes, and freaks of intellectual rope-dancing, like Mr. Disraeli; and his virtue was not of that grim and earnest kind which rebukes a worldly-minded legislature in the person of Mr. Gladstone. The great neutral party in and out of the House discovered that the firebrand Palmerston would not kindle dangerous conflagrations, but was opulent in the heat that warms without burning. We fell out now and then with him, and when he wanted to carry his Conspiracy Bill we raised a cry of foreign dictation, and actually deposed him from the Premiership. It was an exceedingly foolish cry, and Lord Palmerston did well in defying it. He was not in the slightest

degree distressed or thrown out of temper by the fall of his administration, and he enjoyed himself in the comparative repose of Opposition like a school-boy on a holiday. But the fit of anger and unreason passed away, and the nation returned to its enthusiasm for Lord Palmerston. We liked him all the better that he would not be made our slave, and we probably saw, in a confused way, that it would have been more majestic in us to disregard the vapouring French colonels altogether, and to consider it sufficiently obvious that, even if Parliament decreed that the island was not to be made a laboratory for the preparation of explosive mixtures by Orsini and Company, we should not be quite trodden under foot by foreign despots. At all events we could not get along without Old Pam, and so we made it up with him. In the case of his Chinese war, the difference between him and the House was more serious. The Commons pronounced that the insult, real or imaginary, to the Blue Peter floating at the masthead of the *lorcha Arrow*, was not sufficient to justify martial reprisals and the effusion of blood. They were, we think, right. But the people on this occasion decided for the minister against Parliament; and though posterity will hardly return a verdict in his favour, the course he adopted, determined as it was, first, by his sensitive concern for the national honour, secondly, by his brave habit of never deserting a subordinate, added greatly to his popularity with the multitude.

A younger, more inventive, more ambitious statesman would have maintained in greater cordiality the Anglo-French alliance, with the probable result of turning recent European history into a different channel. Had England and France, instead of France alone, helped Italy to settle her affairs, France could not have held back when England called upon her to preserve the integrity of Denmark. In that case, also, the influence of this country might have been brought to bear with effect upon the French occupation of Rome. But whatever the issue may have been, Lord Palmerston acted in a manner characteristically English, and as might have been predicted by one who knew the man. He was incapable of engaging in or continuing alliances for indefinite purposes, how great soever might be the promise of advantage. England was under no treaty obligation to take part with France and Italy against Austria. It was not in the bond. General considerations on the point were for him no considerations. France was under treaty obligation to maintain with England the European arrangement as to the Danish succession. To Lord Palmerston's plain sense and cool imagination it seemed mere absurdity to affirm that the case in which obligation existed could be governed by the precedent of a case in which obligation did not exist. Lord Palmerston's policy was neither brilliant, original, nor chivalrously bold; but it was in accordance with the fundamental principles of English statesmanship, and to have materially altered it

would have been to fling all our traditions to the winds. It is probable that, if ardently supported by the nation, he would, even without the aid of France, have struck a blow for Denmark; but the public sentiment was averse to war, and it was a principle with Lord Palmerston that statesmen ought not to set themselves against a deliberate and decided public opinion. So he reluctantly acquiesced in a policy of inaction. The country was content, and it became understood among all parties that Lord Palmerston was to rule to the end.

His career is full of lessons. It shows what may be done with good, though not superlative faculties, if they are in perfect order. Clearness of brain, capacity of attention, sound memory, coolness, carefulness,—these were his mental powers; and yet he got work out of them which would have done honour to high genius. In statement he was masterly; without a trace of artifice, he placed his facts exactly where they told best. His power of steady, continuous looking served the purpose of a consummate talent for analysis; and the swift, comprehensive sweep of his inductive generalisation resembled the intuitive lightning-flash of genius. Yet there had been no elaborate or formal drilling of his faculties. Their order was the order of health, of glad vigour, of harmonious animation and sportive strength; as it were, a polarisation of light. He was essentially a kind man. The officials who worked under him, the tenants who knew him as the best of landlords, the members of his household, his personal friends, his relations,—all loved him. When a crazy officer made an attempt on his life, the first thing he did was to write a cheque for his defence. He was a man of conscience; more, perhaps, than any one knew, for his nature was delicately reticent, he was a man of religion; but he was not scrupulous. He could, as was hinted before, make as much as another out of secret-service money; he could strike his pen through a passage which might give trouble in a Blue Book with as little hesitation as a good-humoured doctor displays in relieving the headache of Lady Fanciful with a phial of coloured water. His conscience was not furnished with antennæ. Consciences furnished with antennæ, nervously quivering in every change of atmosphere, render politicians impracticable.

Perhaps no single word goes so far in the description of Lord Palmerston as the word "manly." The feminine element is strong in some men,—they are vehement, impulsive, meekly obstinate, prone to extremes, apt to call whims principles, breaking down all fences of logic in their tea-cup storms of feeling. In every respect Lord Palmerston was masculine, not feminine. In one of those wise, well-packed bits which you meet with in the writings of Goethe, it is observed that the key to the female character, as distinguished from that of the man, is found in a reference to the personal and private nature of the interests of women as contrasted with the wider interests of men. Her husband, her children, her household,—these are

a woman's own, and within the circle of these Nature has ordained that her affections shall have their heartfelt play. These interests are essentially disjunctive; they pertain to the woman alone, and they isolate, while they intensify, her sympathies. The gregariousness of humankind, on the other hand, comes out where man acts in association with man; and man's institution is not the family circle, but the nation. The masculine interests are common to the race, and the mental operation of the man is the impersonal reason which knows no prepossession and rejects all colouring of emotion. The Duke of Wellington occurs to one as specially illustrating Goethe's conception of the masculine mind; and Lord Palmerston was at all points a man. No sentimental egotism, no moral irritability, no sweet feminine cant about him. A genial stoicism,—not the stoicism of the cynic,—an inestimable faculty of taking the good and leaving the bad alone, an invincible serenity and lightness and brightness of soul, distinguished him. Hopeful in adversity, cool in prosperity, ready for any fate, Horace would have smiled approval on him, and mildly exclaimed, "*Bene preparatum pectus!*"

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE DUEL.

"I KNEW it was a duel;—be dad I did," said Laurence Fitzgibbon, standing at the corner of Orchard Street and Oxford Street, when Phineas had half told his story. "I was sure of it from the tone of your voice, my boy. We mustn't let it come off, that's all;—not if we can help it." Then Phineas was allowed to proceed and finish his story. "I don't see any way out of it; I don't, indeed," said Laurence. By this time Phineas had come to think that the duel was in very truth the best way out of the difficulty. It was a bad way out, but then it was a way;—and he could not see any other. "As for ill treating him, that's nonsense," said Laurence. "What are the girls to do, if one fellow mayn't come on as soon as another fellow is down? But then, you see, a fellow never knows when he's down himself, and therefore he thinks that he's ill used. I'll tell you what now. I shouldn't wonder if we couldn't do it on the sly,—unless one of you is stupid enough to hit the other in an awkward place. If you are certain of your hand now, the right shoulder is the best spot." Phineas felt very certain that he would not hit Lord Chiltern in an awkward place, although he was by no means sure of his hand. Let come what might, he would aim at his adversary. But of this he had thought it proper to say nothing to Laurence Fitzgibbon.

And the duel did come off on the sly. The meeting in the drawing-room in Portman Square, of which mention was made in the last chapter, took place on a Wednesday afternoon. On the Thursday, Friday, Monday, and Tuesday following, the great debate on Mr. Mildmay's bill was continued, and at three on the Tuesday night the House divided. There was a majority in favour of the Ministers, not large enough to permit them to claim a triumph for their party, or even an ovation for themselves; but still sufficient to enable them to send their bill into committee. Mr. Daubeny and Mr. Turnbull had again joined their forces together in opposition to the ministerial measure. On the Thursday Phineas had shown himself in the House, but during the remainder of this interesting period he was absent from his place, nor was he seen at the clubs, nor did any man know of his whereabouts. I think that Lady Laura Kennedy was the first to miss him with any real sense of his absence. She would now go to Portman Square on the afternoon of every Sunday,—at which time her husband was attend-

ing the second service of his church,—and there she would receive those whom she called her father's guests. But as her father was never there on the Sundays, and as these gatherings had been created by herself, the reader will probably think that she was obeying her husband's behests in regard to the Sabbath after a very indifferent fashion. The reader may be quite sure, however, that Mr. Kennedy knew well what was being done in Portman Square. Whatever might be Lady Laura's faults, she did not commit the fault of disobeying her husband in secret. There were, probably, a few words on the subject; but we need not go very closely into that matter at the present moment.

On the Sunday which afforded some rest in the middle of the great Reform debate Lady Laura asked for Mr. Finn, and no one could answer her question. And then it was remembered that Laurence Fitzgibbon was also absent. Barrington Erle knew nothing of Phineas,—had heard nothing; but was able to say that Fitzgibbon had been with Mr. Ratler, the patronage secretary and liberal whip, early on Thursday, expressing his intention of absenting himself for two days. Mr. Ratler had been wrath, bidding him remain at his duty, and pointing out to him the great importance of the moment. Then Barrington Erle quoted Laurence Fitzgibbon's reply. "My boy," said Laurence to poor Ratler, "the path of duty leads but to the grave. All the same; I'll be in at the death, Ratler, my boy, as sure as the sun's in heaven." Not ten minutes after the telling of this little story, Fitzgibbon entered the room in Portman Square, and Lady Laura at once asked him after Phineas. "Be dad, Lady Laura, I've been out of town myself for two days, and I know nothing."

"Mr. Finn has not been with you, then?"

"With me! No,—not with me. I had a job of business of my own which took me over to Paris. And has Phinny fled too? Poor Ratler! I shouldn't wonder if it isn't an asylum he's in before the session is over."

Laurence Fitzgibbon certainly possessed the rare accomplishment of telling a lie with a good grace. Had any man called him a liar he would have considered himself to be not only insulted, but injured also. He believed himself to be a man of truth. There were, however, in his estimation certain subjects on which a man might depart as wide as the poles are asunder from truth without subjecting himself to any ignominy for falsehood. In dealing with a tradesman as to his debts, or with a rival as to a lady, or with any man or woman in defence of a lady's character, or in any such matter as that of a duel, Laurence believed that a gentleman was bound to lie, and that he would be no gentleman if he hesitated to do so. Not the slightest prick of conscience disturbed him when he told Lady Laura that he had been in Paris, and that he knew nothing of Phineas Finn. But, in truth,

during the last day or two he had been in Flanders, and not in Paris, and had stood as second with his friend Phineas on the sands at Blankenberg, a little fishing-town some twelve miles distant from Bruges, and had left his friend since that at an hotel at Ostend,—with a wound just under the shoulder, from which a bullet had been extracted.

The manner of the meeting had been in this wise. Captain Colepepper and Laurence Fitzgibbon had held their meeting, and at this meeting Laurence had taken certain standing-ground on behalf of his friend, and in obedience to his friend's positive instruction;—which was this, that his friend could not abandon his right of addressing the young lady, should he hereafter ever think fit to do so. Let that be granted, and Laurence would do anything. But then that could not be granted, and Laurence could only shrug his shoulders. Nor would Laurence admit that his friend had been false. "The question lies in a nutshell," said Laurence, with that sweet Connaught brogue which always came to him when he desired to be effective;—"here it is. One gentleman tells another that he's sweet upon a young lady, but that the young lady has refused him, and always will refuse him, for ever and ever. That's the truth anyhow. Is the second gentleman bound by that not to address the young lady? I say he is not bound. It'd be a d——d hard tratement, Captain Colepepper, if a man's mouth and all the ardent affections of his heart were to be stopped in that manner! By Jases, I don't know who'd like to be the friend of any man if that's to be the way of it."

Captain Colepepper was not very good at an argument. "I think they'd better see each other," said Colepepper, pulling his thick grey moustache.

"If you choose to have it so, so be it. But I think it the hardest thing in the world;—I do indeed." Then they put their heads together in the most friendly way, and declared that the affair should, if possible, be kept private.

On the Thursday night Lord Chiltern and Captain Colepepper went over by Calais and Lille to Bruges. Laurence Fitzgibbon, with his friend Dr. O'Shaughnessy, crossed by the direct boat from Dover to Ostend. Phineas went to Ostend by Dover and Calais, but he took the day route on Friday. It had all been arranged among them, so that there might be no suspicion as to the job in hand. Even O'Shaughnessy and Laurence Fitzgibbon had left London by separate trains. They met on the sands at Blankenberg about nine o'clock on the Saturday morning, having reached that village in different vehicles from Ostend and Bruges, and had met quite unobserved amidst the sand-heaps. But one shot had been exchanged, and Phineas had been wounded in the right shoulder. He had proposed to exchange another shot with his left hand, declaring his capability of shooting quite as well with the left as with the right; but to this both Colepepper and

Fitzgibbon had objected. Lord Chiltern had offered to shake hands with his late friend in a true spirit of friendship, if only his late friend would say that he did not intend to prosecute his suit with the young lady. In all these disputes the young lady's name was never mentioned. Phineas indeed had not once named Violet to Fitzgibbon, speaking of her always as the lady in question; and though Laurence correctly surmised the identity of the young lady, he never hinted that he had even guessed her name. I doubt whether Lord Chiltern had been so wary when alone with Captain Colepepper; but then Lord Chiltern was, when he spoke at all, a very plain-spoken man. Of course his lordship's late friend Phineas would give no such pledge, and therefore Lord Chiltern moved off the ground and back to Blankenberg and Bruges, and into Brussels, in still living enmity with our hero. Laurence and the doctor took Phineas back to Ostend, and though the bullet was then in his shoulder, Phineas made his way through Blankenberg after such a fashion that no one there knew what had occurred. Not a living soul, except the five concerned, was at that time aware that a duel had been fought among the sand-hills.

Laurence Fitzgibbon made his way to Dover by the Saturday night's boat, and was able to show himself in Portman Square on the Sunday. "Know anything about Phinny Finn?" he said afterwards to Barrington Erle, in answer to an inquiry from that anxious gentleman. "Not a word! I think you'd better send the town-crier round after him." Barrington, however, did not feel quite so well assured of Fitzgibbon's truth as Lady Laura had done.

Dr. O'Shaughnessy remained during the Sunday and Monday at Ostend with his patient, and the people at the inn only knew that Mr. Finn had sprained his shoulder badly; and on the Tuesday they came back to London again, via Calais and Dover. No bone had been broken, and Phineas, though his shoulder was very painful, bore the journey well. O'Shaughnessy had received a telegram on the Monday, telling him that the division would certainly take place on the Tuesday,—and on the Tuesday, at about ten in the evening, Phineas went down to the House. "By —, you're here," said Ratler, taking hold of him with an affection that was too warm. "Yes; I'm here," said Phineas, wincing in agony; "but be a little careful, there's a good fellow. I've been down in Kent and put my arm out."

"Put your arm out, have you?" said Ratler, observing the sling for the first time. "I'm sorry for that. But you'll stop and vote?"

"Yes;—I'll stop and vote. I've come up for the purpose. But I hope it won't be very late."

"There are both Daubeney and Gresham to speak yet, and at least three others. I don't suppose it will be much before three. But you're all right now. You can go down and smoke if you like!" In

this way Phineas Finn spoke in the debate, and heard the end of it, voting for his party, and fought his duel with Lord Chiltern in the middle of it.

He did go and sit on a well-cushioned bench in the smoking-room, and then was interrogated by many of his friends as to his mysterious absence. He had, he said, been down in Kent, and had had an accident with his arm by which he had been confined. When this questioner and that perceived that there was some little mystery in the matter the questioners did not push their questions, but simply entertained their own surmises. One indiscreet questioner, however, did trouble Phineas sorely, declaring that there must have been some affair in which a woman had had a part, and asking after the young lady of Kent. This indiscreet questioner was Laurence Fitzgibbon, who, as Phineas thought, carried his spirit of intrigue a little too far. Phineas stayed and voted, and then he went painfully home to his lodgings.

How singular would it be if this affair of the duel should pass away, and no one be a bit the wiser but those four men who had been with him on the sands at Blankenberg! Again he wondered at his own luck. He had told himself that a duel with Lord Chiltern must create a quarrel between him and Lord Chiltern's relations, and also between him and Violet Effingham; that it must banish him from his comfortable seat for Loughton, and ruin him in regard to his political prospects. And now he had fought his duel, and was back in town, —and the thing seemed to have been a thing of nothing. He had not as yet seen Lady Laura or Violet, but he had no doubt but they both were as much in the dark as other people. The day might arrive, he thought, on which it would be pleasant for him to tell Violet Effingham what had occurred, but that day had not come as yet. Whither Lord Chiltern had gone, or what Lord Chiltern intended to do, he had not any idea; but he imagined that he should soon hear something of her brother from Lady Laura. That Lord Chiltern should say a word to Lady Laura of what had occurred,—or to any other person in the world,—he did not in the least suspect. There could be no man more likely to be reticent in such matters than Lord Chiltern, —or more sure to be guided by an almost exaggerated sense of what honour required of him. Nor did he doubt the discretion of his friend Fitzgibbon;—if only his friend might not damage the secret by being too discreet. Of the silence of the doctor and the captain he was by no means equally sure; but even though they should gossip, the gossiping would take so long a time in oozing out and becoming recognised information, as to have lost much of its power for injuring him. Were Lady Laura to hear at this moment that he had been over to Belgium, and had fought a duel with Lord Chiltern respecting Violet, she would probably feel herself obliged to quarrel with him; but no such obligation would rest on her, if in the course of six or

nine months she should gradually have become aware that such an encounter had taken place.

Lord Chiltern, during their interview at the rooms in Great Marlborough Street, had said a word to him about the seat in Parliament;—had expressed some opinion that as he, Phineas Finn, was interfering with the views of the Standish family in regard to Miss Effingham, he ought not to keep the Standish seat, which had been conferred upon him in ignorance of any such intended interference. Phineas, as he thought of this, could not remember Lord Chiltern's words, but there was present to him an idea that such had been their purport. Was he bound, in circumstances as they now existed, to give up Loughton? He made up his mind that he was not so bound unless Lord Chiltern should demand from him that he should do so; but, nevertheless, he was uneasy in his position. It was quite true that the seat now was his for this session by all parliamentary law, even though the electors themselves might wish to be rid of him, and that Lord Brentford could not even open his mouth upon the matter in a tone more loud than that of a whisper. But Phineas, feeling that he had consented to accept the favour of a corrupt seat from Lord Brentford, felt also that he was bound to give up the spoil if it were demanded from him. If it were demanded from him, either by the father or the son, it should be given up at once.

On the following morning he found a leading article in the *People's Banner* devoted solely to himself. "During the late debate,"—so ran a passage in the leading article,—"*Mr. Finn, Lord Brentford's Irish nominee for his pocket-borough at Loughton, did at last manage to stand on his legs and open his mouth. If we are not mistaken, this is Mr. Finn's third session in Parliament, and hitherto he has been unable to articulate three sentences, though he has on more than one occasion made the attempt. For what special merit this young man has been selected for aristocratic patronage we do not know,—but that there must be some merit recognisable by aristocratic eyes, we surmise. Three years ago he was a raw young Irishman, living in London as Irishmen only know how to live, earning nothing, and apparently without means; and then suddenly he burst out as a member of Parliament and as the friend of Cabinet Ministers. The possession of one good gift must be acceded to the honourable member for Loughton,—he is a handsome young man, and looks to be as strong as a coal-porter. Can it be that his promotion has sprung from this? Be this as it may, we should like to know where he has been during his late mysterious absence from Parliament, and in what way he came by the wound in his arm. Even handsome young members of Parliament, fêted by titled ladies and their rich lords, are amenable to the laws,—to the laws of this country, and to the laws of any other which it may suit them to visit for a while!*"

"Infamous scoundrel!" said Phineas to himself, as he read this.

"Vile, low, disreputable blackguard!" It was clear enough, however, that Quintus Slide had found out something of his secret. If so, his only hope would rest on the fact that his friends were not likely to see the columns of the *People's Banner*.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LADY LAURA IS TOLD.

By the time that Mr. Mildmay's great bill was going into committee Phineas was able to move about London in comfort,—with his arm, however, still in a sling. There had been nothing more about him and his wound in the *People's Banner*, and he was beginning to hope that that nuisance would also be allowed to die away. He had seen Lady Laura,—having dined in Grosvenor Place, where he had been petted to his heart's content. His dinner had been cut up for him, and his wound had been treated with the tenderest sympathy. And, singular to say, no questions were asked. He had been to Kent and had come by an accident. No more than that was told, and his dear sympathising friends were content to receive so much information, and to ask for no more. But he had not as yet seen Violet Effingham, and he was beginning to think that this romance about Violet might as well be brought to a close. He had not, however, as yet been able to go into crowded rooms, and unless he went out to large parties he could not be sure that he would meet Miss Effingham.

At last he resolved that he would tell Lady Laura the whole truth,—not the truth about the duel, but the truth about Violet Effingham, and ask for her assistance. When making this resolution, I think that he must have forgotten much that he had learned of his friend's character; and by making it, I think that he showed also that he had not learned as much as his opportunities might have taught him. He knew Lady Laura's obstinacy of purpose, he knew her devotion to her brother, and he knew also how desirous she had been that her brother should win Violet Effingham for himself. This knowledge should, I think, have sufficed to show him how improbable it was that Lady Laura should assist him in his enterprise. But beyond all this was the fact,—a fact as to the consequences of which Phineas himself was entirely blind, beautifully ignorant,—that Lady Laura had once condescended to love himself. Nay;—she had gone farther than this, and had ventured to tell him, even after her marriage, that the remembrance of some feeling that had once dwelt in her heart in regard to him was still a danger to her. She had warned him from Loughlinter, and then had received him in London;—and now he selected her as his confidante in this love affair! Had he not been beautifully ignorant and most modestly blind, he would surely have placed his confidence elsewhere.

It was not that Lady Laura Kennedy ever confessed to herself the existence of a vicious passion. She had, indeed, learned to tell herself that she could not love her husband; and once, in the excitement of such silent announcements to herself, she had asked herself whether her heart was quite a blank, and had answered herself by desiring Phineas Finn to absent himself from Loughlinter. During all the subsequent winter she had scourged herself inwardly for her own imprudence, her quite unnecessary folly in so doing. What! could not she, Laura Standish, who from her earliest years of girlish womanhood had resolved that she would use the world as men use it, and not as women do,—could not she have felt the slight shock of a passing tenderness for a handsome youth without allowing the feeling to be a rock before her, big enough and sharp enough for the destruction of her entire barque? Could not she command, if not her heart, at any rate her mind, so that she might safely assure herself that, whether this man or any man was here or there, her course would be unaltered? What though Phineas Finn had been in the same house with her throughout all the winter, could not she have so lived with him on terms of friendship, that every deed and word and look of her friendship might have been open to her husband,—or open to all the world? She could have done so. She told herself that that was not,—need not have been her great calamity. Whether she could endure the dull, monotonous control of her slow but imperious lord,—or whether she must not rather tell him that it was not to be endured,—that was her trouble. So she told herself, and again admitted Phineas to her intimacy in London. But, nevertheless, Phineas, had he not been beautifully ignorant and most blind to his own achievements, would not have expected from Lady Laura Kennedy assistance with Miss Violet Effingham.

Phineas knew when to find Lady Laura alone, and he came upon her one day at the favourable hour. The two first clauses of the bill had been passed after twenty fights and endless divisions. Two points had been settled, as to which, however, Mr. Gresham had been driven to give way so far and to yield so much, that men declared that such a bill as the Government could consent to call its own could never be passed by that Parliament in that session. Immediately on his entrance into her room Lady Laura began about the third clause. Would the House let Mr. Gresham have his way about the —? Phineas stopped her at once. "My dear friend," he said, "I have come to you in a private trouble, and I want you to drop politics for half an hour. I have come to you for help."

"A private trouble, Mr. Finn! Is it serious?"

"It is very serious,—but it is no trouble of the kind of which you are thinking. But it is serious enough to take up every thought."

"Can I help you?"

"Indeed you can. Whether you will or no is a different thing."

"I would help you in anything in my power, Mr. Finn. Do you not know it?"

"You have been very kind to me!"

"And so would Mr. Kennedy."

"Mr. Kennedy cannot help me here."

"What is it, Mr. Finn?"

"I suppose I may as well tell you at once,—in plain language. I do not know how to put my story into words that shall fit it. I love Violet Effingham. Will you help me to win her to be my wife?"

"You love Violet Effingham!" said Lady Laura. And as she spoke the look of her countenance towards him was so changed that he became at once aware that from her no assistance might be expected. His eyes were not opened in any degree to the second reason above given for Lady Laura's opposition to his wishes, but he instantly perceived that she would still cling to that destination of Violet's hand which had for years past been the favourite scheme of her life. "Have you not always known, Mr. Finn, what have been our hopes for Violet?"

Phineas, though he had perceived his mistake, felt that he must go on with his cause. Lady Laura must know his wishes sooner or later, and it was as well that she should learn them in this way as in any other. "Yes;—but I have known also, from your brother's own lips,—and indeed from yours also, Lady Laura,—that Chiltern has been three times refused by Miss Effingham."

"What does that matter? Do men never ask more than three times?"

"And must I be debarred for ever while he prosecutes a hopeless suit?"

"Yes;—you of all men."

"Why so, Lady Laura?"

"Because in this matter you have been his chosen friend,—and mine. We have told you everything, trusting to you. We have believed in your honour. We have thought that with you, at any rate, we were safe." These words were very bitter to Phineas, and yet when he had written his letter at Loughton, he had intended to be so perfectly honest, chivalrously honest! Now Lady Laura spoke to him and looked at him as though he had been most basely false,—most untrue to that noble friendship which had been lavished upon him by all her family. He felt that he would become the prey of her most injurious thoughts unless he could fully explain his ideas, and he felt, also, that the circumstances did not admit of his explaining them. He could not take up the argument on Violet's side, and show how unfair it would be to her that she should be debarred from the homage due to her by any man who really loved her, because Lord Chiltern chose to think that he still had a claim,—or at any rate a chance. And Phineas knew well of himself,—or thought

that he knew well,—that he would not have interfered had there been any chance for Lord Chiltern. Lord Chiltern had himself told him more than once that there was no such chance. How was he to explain all this to Lady Laura? “Mr. Finn,” said Lady Laura, “I can hardly believe this of you, even when you tell it me yourself.”

“Listen to me, Lady Laura, for a moment.”

“Certainly, I will listen. But that you should come to me for assistance! I cannot understand it. Men sometimes become harder than stones.”

“I do not think that I am hard.” Poor blind fool! He was still thinking only of Violet, and of the accusation made against him that he was untrue to his friendship for Lord Chiltern. Of that other accusation which could not be expressed in open words he understood nothing,—nothing at all as yet.

“Hard and false,—capable of receiving no impression beyond the outside husk of the heart.”

“Oh, Lady Laura, do not say that. If you could only know how true I am in my affection for you all.”

“And how do you show it?—by coming in between Oswald and the only means that are open to us of reconciling him to his father;—means that have been explained to you exactly as though you had been one of ourselves. Oswald has treated you as a brother in the matter, telling you everything, and this is the way you would repay him for his confidence!”

“Can I help it, that I have learnt to love this girl?”

“Yes, sir,—you can help it. What if she had been Oswald’s wife;—would you have loved her then? Do you speak of loving a woman as if it were an affair of fate, over which you have no control? I doubt whether your passions are so strong as that. You had better put aside your love for Miss Effingham. I feel assured that it will never hurt you.” Then some remembrance of what had passed between him and Lady Laura Standish near the falls of the Linter, when he first visited Scotland, came across his mind. “Believe me,” she said with a smile, “this little wound in your heart will soon be cured.”

He stood silent before her, looking away from her, thinking over it all. He certainly had believed himself to be violently in love with Lady Laura, and yet when he had just now entered her drawing-room, he had almost forgotten that there had been such a passage in his life. And he had believed that she had forgotten it,—even though she had counselled him not to come to Loughlinter within the last nine months! He had been a boy then, and had not known himself;—but now he was a man, and was proud of the intensity of his love. There came upon him some passing throb of pain from his shoulder, reminding him of the duel, and he was proud also of that. He had been willing to risk everything,—life, prospects, and position,—sooner

than abandon the slight hope which was his of possessing Violet Effingham. And now he was told that this wound in his heart would soon be cured, and was told so by a woman to whom he had once sung a song of another passion. It is very hard to answer a woman in such circumstances, because her womanhood gives her so strong a ground of vantage! Lady Laura might venture to throw in his teeth the fickleness of his heart, but he could not in reply tell her that to change a love was better than to marry without love,—that to be capable of such a change showed no such inferiority of nature as did the capacity for such a marriage. She could hit him with her argument; but he could only remember his, and think how violent might be the blow he could inflict,—if it were not that she were a woman, and therefore guarded. “You will not help me then?” he said, when they had both been silent for a while.

“Help you? How should I help you?”

“I wanted no other help than this,—that I might have had an opportunity of meeting Violet here, and of getting from her some answer.”

“Has the question then never been asked already?” said Lady Laura. To this Phineas made no immediate reply. There was no reason why he should show his whole hand to an adversary. “Why do you not go to Lady Baldock’s house?” continued Lady Laura. “You are admitted there. You know Lady Baldock. Go and ask her to stand your friend with her niece. See what she will say to you. As far as I understand these matters, that is the fair, honourable, open way in which gentlemen are wont to make their overtures.”

“I would make mine to none but to herself,” said Phineas.

“Then why have you made it to me, sir?” demanded Lady Laura.

“I have come to you as I would to my sister.”

“Your sister? Psha! I am not your sister, Mr. Finn. Nor, were I so, should I fail to remember that I have a dearer brother to whom my faith is pledged. Look here. Within the last three weeks Oswald has sacrificed everything to his father, because he was determined that Mr. Kennedy should have the money which he thought was due to my husband. He has enabled my father to do what he will with Saulsby. Papa will never hurt him;—I know that. Hard as papa is with him, he will never hurt Oswald’s future position. Papa is too proud to do that. Violet has heard what Oswald has done; and now that he has nothing of his own to offer her for the future but his bare title, now that he has given papa power to do what he will with the property, I believe that she would accept him instantly. That is her disposition.”

Phineas again paused a moment before he replied. “Let him try,” he said.

“He is away,—in Brussels.”

"Send to him, and bid him return. I will be patient, Lady Laura. Let him come and try, and I will bide my time. I confess that I have no right to interfere with him if there be a chance for him. If there is no chance, my right is as good as that of any other."

There was something in this which made Lady Laura feel that she could not maintain her hostility against this man on behalf of her brother;—and yet she could not force herself to be other than hostile to him. Her heart was sore, and it was he that had made it sore. She had lectured herself, schooling herself with mental sackcloth and ashes, rebuking herself with heaviest censures from day to day, because she had found herself to be in danger of regarding this man with a perilous love; and she had been constant in this work of penance till she had been able to assure herself that the sackcloth and ashes had done their work, and that the danger was past. "I like him still and love him well," she had said to herself with something almost of triumph, "but I have ceased to think of him as one who might have been my lover." And yet she was now sick and sore, almost beside herself with the agony of the wound, because this man whom she had been able to throw aside from her heart had also been able so to throw her aside. And she felt herself constrained to rebuke him with what bitterest words she might use. She had felt it easy to do this at first, on her brother's score. She had accused him of treachery to his friendship,—both as to Oswald and as to herself. On that she could say cutting words without subjecting herself to suspicion even from herself. But now this power was taken away from her, and still she wished to wound him. She desired to taunt him with his old fickleness, and yet to subject herself to no imputation. "Your right!" she said. "What gives you any right in the matter?"

"Simply the right of a fair field, and no favour."

"And yet you come to me for favour,—to me, because I am her friend. You cannot win her yourself, and think I may help you! I do not believe in your love for her. There! If there were no other reason, and I could help you, I would not, because I think your heart is a sham heart. She is pretty, and has money——"

"Lady Laura!"

"She is pretty, and has money, and is the fashion. I do not wonder that you should wish to have her. But, Mr. Finn, I believe that Oswald really loves her;—and that you do not. His nature is deeper than yours."

He understood it all now as he listened to the tone of her voice, and looked into the lines of her face. There was written there plainly enough that *spretæ injuria formæ* of which she herself was conscious, but only conscious. Even his eyes, blind as he had been, were opened,—and he knew that he had been a fool.

"I am sorry that I came to you," he said.

"It would have been better that you should not have done so," she replied.

"And yet perhaps it is well that there should be no misunderstanding between us."

"Of course I must tell my brother."

He paused but for a moment, and then he answered her with a sharp voice, "He has been told."

"And who told him?"

"I did. I wrote to him the moment that I knew my own mind. I owed it to him to do so. But my letter missed him, and he only learned it the other day."

"Have you seen him since?"

"Yes;—I have seen him."

"And what did he say? How did he take it? Did he bear it from you quietly?"

"No, indeed;" and Phineas smiled as he spoke.

"Tell me, Mr. Finn; what happened? What is to be done?"

"Nothing is to be done. Everything has been done. I may as well tell you all. I am sure that for the sake of me, as well as of your brother, you will keep our secret. He required that I should either give up my suit, or that I should,—fight him. As I could not comply with the one request, I found myself bound to comply with the other."

"And there has been a duel?"

"Yes;—there has been a duel. We went over to Belgium, and it was soon settled. He wounded me here in the arm."

"Suppose you had killed him, Mr. Finn?"

"That, Lady Laura, would have been a misfortune so terrible that I was bound to prevent it." Then he paused again, regretting what he had said. "You have surprised me, Lady Laura, into an answer that I should not have made. I may be sure,—may I not,—that my words will not go beyond yourself?"

"Yes;—you may be sure of that." This she said plaintively, with a tone of voice and demeanour of body altogether different from that which she lately bore. Neither of them knew what was taking place between them; but she was, in truth, gradually submitting herself again to this man's influence. Though she rebuked him at every turn for what he said, for what he had done, for what he proposed to do, still she could not teach herself to despise him, or even to cease to love him for any part of it. She knew it all now,—except that word or two which had passed between Violet and Phineas in the rides of Saulsby Park. But she suspected something even of that, feeling sure that the only matter on which Phineas would say nothing would be that of his own success,—if success there had been. "And so you and Oswald have quarrelled, and there has been a duel. That is why you were away?"

"That is why I was away."

"How wrong of you,—how very wrong! Had he been,—killed, how could you have looked us in the face again?"

"I could not have looked you in the face again."

"But that is over now. And were you friends afterwards?"

"No;—we did not part as friends. Having gone there to fight with him,—most unwillingly,—I could not afterwards promise him that I would give up Miss Effingham. You say she will accept him now. Let him come and try." She had nothing further to say,—no other argument to use. There was the soreness at her heart still present to her, making her wretched, instigating her to hurt him if she knew how to do so, in spite of her regard for him. But she felt that she was weak and powerless. She had shot her arrows at him,—all but one,—and if she used that, its poisoned point would wound herself far more surely than it would touch him. "The duel was very silly," he said. "You will not speak of it."

"No; certainly not."

"I am glad at least that I have told you everything."

"I do not know why you should be glad. I cannot help you."

"And you will say nothing to Violet?"

"Everything that I can say in Oswald's favour. I will say nothing of the duel; but beyond that you have no right to demand my secrecy with her. Yes; you had better go, Mr. Finn, for I am hardly well. And remember this,—If you can forget this little episode about Miss Effingham, so will I forget it also; and so will Oswald. I can promise for him." Then she smiled and gave him her hand, and he went.

She rose from her chair as he left the room, and waited till she heard the sound of the great door closing behind him before she again sat down. Then, when he was gone,—when she was sure that he was no longer there with her in the same house,—she laid her head down upon the arm of the sofa, and burst into a flood of tears. She was no longer angry with Phineas. There was no further longing in her heart for revenge. She did not now desire to injure him, though she had done so as long as he was with her. Nay,—she resolved instantly, almost instinctively, that Lord Brentford must know nothing of all this, lest the political prospects of the young member for Loughton should be injured. To have rebuked him, to rebuke him again and again, would be only fair,—would at least be womanly; but she would protect him from all material injury as far as her power of protection might avail. And why was she weeping now so bitterly? Of course she asked herself, as she rubbed away the tears with her hands,—Why should she weep? She was not weak enough to tell herself that she was weeping for any injury that had been done to Oswald. She got up suddenly from the sofa, and pushed away her hair from her face, and pushed away the tears from her cheeks, and then clenched her fists as she held them out at full length from

her body, and stood, looking up with her eyes fixed upon the wall. "Ass!" she exclaimed. "Fool! Idiot! That I should not be able to crush it into nothing and have done with it! Why should he not have her? After all, he is better than Oswald. Oh,—is that you?" The door of the room had been opened while she was standing thus, and her husband had entered.

"Yes,—it is I. Is anything wrong?"

"Very much is wrong."

"What is it, Laura?"

"You cannot help me."

"If you are in trouble you should tell me what it is, and leave it to me to try to help you."

"Nonsense!" she said, shaking her head.

"Laura, that is uncourteous,—not to say undutiful also."

"I suppose it was,—both. I beg your pardon, but I could not help it."

"Laura, you should help such words to me."

"There are moments, Robert, when even a married woman must be herself rather than her husband's wife. It is so, though you cannot understand it."

"I certainly do not understand it."

"You cannot make a woman subject to you as a dog is so. You may have all the outside and as much of the inside as you can master. With a dog you may be sure of both."

"I suppose this means that you have secrets in which I am not to share."

"I have troubles about my father and my brother which you cannot share. My brother is a ruined man."

"Who ruined him?"

"I will not talk about it any more. I will not speak to you of him or of papa. I only want you to understand that there is a subject which must be secret to myself, and on which I may be allowed to shed tears,—if I am so weak. I will not trouble you on a matter in which I have not your sympathy." Then she left him, standing in the middle of the room, depressed by what had occurred,—but not thinking of it as of a trouble which would do more than make him uncomfortable for that day.

CHAPTER XL

MADAME MAX GOESLER.

DAY after day, and clause after clause, the bill was fought in committee, and few men fought with more constancy on the side of the Ministers than did the member for Loughton. Troubled though he was by his quarrel with Lord Chiltern, by his love for Violet Effing-

ham, by the silence of his friend Lady Laura,—for since he had told her of the duel she had become silent to him, never writing to him, and hardly speaking to him when she met him in society,—nevertheless Phineas was not so troubled but what he could work at his vocation. Now, when he would find himself upon his legs in the House, he would wonder at the hesitation which had lately troubled him so sorely. He would sit sometimes and speculate upon that dimness of eye, upon that tendency of things to go round, upon that obtrusive palpitation of heart, which had afflicted him so seriously for so long a time. The House now was no more to him than any other chamber, and the members no more than other men. He guarded himself from orations, speaking always very shortly,—because he believed that policy and good judgment required that he should be short. But words were very easy to him, and he would feel as though he could talk for ever. And then quickly came to him a reputation for practical usefulness. He was a man with strong opinions, who could yet be submissive. And no man seemed to know how his reputation had come. He had made one good speech after two or three failures. All who knew him, his whole party, had been aware of his failure; and his one good speech had been regarded by many as no very wonderful effort. But he was a man who was pleasant to other men,—not combative, not self-asserting beyond the point at which self-assertion ceases to be a necessity of manliness. Nature had been very good to him, making him comely inside and out,—and with this comeliness he had crept into popularity.

The secret of the duel was, I think, at this time, known to a great many men and women. So Phineas perceived; but it was not, he thought, known either to Lord Brentford or to Violet Effingham. And in this he was right. No rumour of it had yet reached the ears of either of these persons;—and rumour, though she flies so fast and so far, is often slow in reaching those ears which would be most interested in her tidings. Some dim report of the duel reached even Mr. Kennedy, and he asked his wife. “Who told you?” said she, sharply.

“Bonteen told me that it was certainly so.”

“Mr. Bonteen always knows more than anybody else about everything except his own business.”

“Then it is not true?”

Lady Laura paused,—and then she lied. “Of course it is not true. I should be very sorry to ask either of them, but to me it seems to be the most improbable thing in life.” Then Mr. Kennedy believed that there had been no duel. In his wife’s word he put absolute faith, and he thought that she would certainly know anything that her brother had done. As he was a man given to but little discourse, he asked no further questions about the duel either in the House or at the Clubs.

At first, Phineas had been greatly dismayed when men had asked him questions tending to elicit from him some explanation of the mystery ;—but by degrees he became used to it, and as the tidings which had got abroad did not seem to injure him, and as the questionings were not pushed very closely, he became indifferent. There came out another article in the *People's Banner* in which Lord C——n and Mr. P——s F——n were spoken of as glaring examples of that aristocratic snobility,—that was the expressive word coined, evidently with great delight, for the occasion,—which the rotten state of London society in high quarters now produced. Here was a young lord, infamously notorious, quarrelling with one of his boon-companions whom he had appointed to a private seat in the House of Commons, fighting duels, breaking the laws, scandalising the public,—and all this was done without punishment to the guilty ! There were old stories afloat,—so said the article,—of what in a former century had been done by Lord Mohuns and Mr. Bests ; but now, in 186—, &c. &c. &c. And so the article went on. Any reader may fill in without difficulty the concluding indignation and virtuous appeal for reform in social morals as well as Parliament. But Phineas had so far progressed that he had almost come to like this kind of thing.

Certainly I think that the duel did him no harm in society. Otherwise he would hardly have been asked to a semi-political dinner at Lady Glencora Palliser's, even though he might have been invited to make one of the five hundred guests who were crowded into her saloons and staircases after the dinner was over. To have been one of the five hundred was nothing ; but to be one of the sixteen was a great deal,—was indeed so much that Phineas, not understanding as yet the advantage of his own comeliness, was at a loss to conceive why so pleasant an honour was conferred upon him. There was no man among the eight men at the dinner-party not in Parliament,—and the only other except Phineas not attached to the Government was Mr. Palliser's great friend, John Grey, the member for Silverbridge. There were four Cabinet Ministers in the room,—the Duke, Lord Cantrip, Mr. Gresham, and the owner of the mansion. There was also Barrington Erle and young Lord Fawn, an Under Secretary of State. But the wit and grace of the ladies present lent more of character to the party than even the position of the men. Lady Glencora Palliser herself was a host. There was no woman then in London better able to talk to a dozen people on a dozen subjects ; and then, moreover, she was still in the flush of her beauty and the bloom of her youth. Lady Laura was there ;—by what means divided from her husband Phineas could not imagine ; but Lady Glencora was good at such divisions. Lady Cantrip had been allowed to come with her lord ;—but, as was well understood, Lord Cantrip was not so manifestly a husband as was Mr. Kennedy. There are men who cannot guard themselves from the assertion of marital rights at most

inappropriate moments. Now Lord Cantrip lived with his wife most happily; yet you should pass hours with him and her together, and hardly know that they knew each other. One of the Duke's daughters was there,—but not the Duchess, who was known to be heavy;—and there was the beauteous Marchioness of Hartleap. Violet Effingham was in the room also,—giving Phineas a blow at the heart as he saw her smile. Might it be that he could speak a word to her on this occasion? Mr. Grey had also brought his wife;—and then there was Madame Max Goesler. Phineas found that it was his fortune to take down to dinner,—not Violet Effingham, but Madame Max Goesler. And, when he was placed at dinner, on the other side of him there sat Lady Hartleap, who addressed the few words which she spoke exclusively to Mr. Palliser. There had been in former days matters difficult of arrangement between those two; but I think that those old passages had now been forgotten by them both. Phineas was, therefore, driven to depend exclusively on Madame Max Goesler for conversation, and he found that he was not called upon to cast his seed into barren ground.

Up to that moment he had never heard of Madame Max Goesler. Lady Glencora, in introducing them, had pronounced the lady's name so clearly that he had caught it with accuracy, but he could not surmise whence she had come, or why she was there. She was a woman probably something over thirty years of age. She had thick black hair, which she wore in curls,—unlike anybody else in the world,—in curls which hung down low beneath her face, covering, and perhaps intended to cover, a certain thinness in her cheeks which would otherwise have taken something from the charm of her countenance. Her eyes were large, of a dark blue colour, and very bright,—and she used them in a manner which is as yet hardly common with Englishwomen. She seemed to intend that you should know that she employed them to conquer you,—looking as a knight may have looked in olden days who entered a chamber with his sword drawn from the scabbard and in his hand. Her forehead was broad and somewhat low. Her nose was not classically beautiful, being broader at the nostrils than beauty required, and, moreover, not perfectly straight in its line. Her lips were thin. Her teeth, which she endeavoured to show as little as possible, were perfect in form and colour. They who criticised her severely said, however, that they were too large. Her chin was well formed, and divided by a dimple which gave to her face a softness of grace which would otherwise have been much missed. But perhaps her great beauty was in the brilliant clearness of her dark complexion. You might almost fancy that you could see into it so as to read the different lines beneath the skin. She was somewhat tall, though by no means tall to a fault, and was so thin as to be almost meagre in her proportions. She always wore her dress close up to her neck, and never showed the bareness of her arms. Though she was the

only woman so clad now present in the room, this singularity did not specially strike one, because in other respects her apparel was so rich and quaint as to make inattention to it impossible. The observer who did not observe very closely would perceive that Madame Max Goesler's dress was unlike the dress of other women, but seeing that it was unlike in make, unlike in colour, and unlike in material, the ordinary observer would not see also that it was unlike in form for any other purpose than that of maintaining its general peculiarity of character. In colour she was abundant, and yet the fabric of her garment was always black. My pen may not dare to describe the tracteries of yellow and ruby silk which went in and out through the black lace, across her bosom, and round her neck, and over her shoulders, and along her arms, and down to the very ground at her feet, robbing the black stuff of all its sombre solemnity, and producing a brightness in which there was nothing gaudy. She wore no vestige of crinoline, and hardly anything that could be called a train. And the lace sleeves of her dress, with their bright tracteries of silk, were fitted close to her arms; and round her neck she wore the smallest possible collar of lace, above which there was a short chain of Roman gold with a ruby pendant. And she had rubies in her ears, and a ruby brooch, and rubies in the bracelets on her arms. Such, as regarded the outward woman, was Madame Max Goesler; and Phineas, as he took his place by her side, thought that fortune for the nonce had done well with him,—only that he should have liked it so much better could he have been seated next to Violet Effingham!

I have said that in the matter of conversation his morsel of seed was not thrown into barren ground. I do not know that he can truly be said to have produced even a morsel. The subjects were all mooted by the lady, and so great was her fertility in discoursing that all conversational grasses seemed to grow with her spontaneously. "Mr. Finn," she said, "what would I not give to be a member of the British Parliament at such a moment as this!"

"Why at such a moment as this particularly?"

"Because there is something to be done, which, let me tell you, senator though you are, is not always the case with you."

"My experience is short, but it sometimes seems to me that there is too much to be done."

"Too much of nothingness, Mr. Finn. Is not that the case? But now there is a real fight in the lists. The one great drawback to the life of women is that they cannot act in politics."

"And which side would you take?"

"What, here in England?" said Madame Max Goesler,—from which expression, and from one or two others of a similar nature, Phineas was led into a doubt whether the lady were a countrywoman of his or not. "Indeed, it is hard to say. Politically I should want

to out-Turnbull Mr. Turnbull, to vote for everything that could be voted for,—ballot, manhood suffrage, womanhood suffrage, unlimited right of striking, tenant right, education of everybody, annual parliaments, and the abolition of at least the bench of bishops."

"That is a strong programme," said Phineas.

"It is strong, Mr. Finn, but that's what I should like. I think, however, that I should be tempted to feel a dastard security in the conviction that I might advocate my views without any danger of seeing them carried out. For, to tell you the truth, I don't at all want to put down ladies and gentlemen."

"You think that they would go with the bench of bishops?"

"I don't want anything to go,—that is, as far as real life is concerned. There's that dear good Bishop of Abingdon is the best friend I have in the world,—and as for the Bishop of Dorchester, I'd walk from here to there to hear him preach. And I'd sooner hem aprons for them all myself than that they should want those pretty decorations. But then, Mr. Finn, there is such a difference between life and theory;—is there not?"

"And it is so comfortable to have theories that one is not bound to carry out," said Phineas.

"Isn't it? Mr. Palliser, do you live up to your political theories?" At this moment Mr. Palliser was sitting perfectly silent between Lady Hartleap and the Duke's daughter, and he gave a little spring in his chair as this sudden address was made to him. "Your House of Commons theories, I mean, Mr. Palliser. Mr. Finn is saying that it is very well to have far-advanced ideas,—it does not matter how far advanced,—because one is never called upon to act upon them practically."

"That is a dangerous doctrine, I think," said Mr. Palliser.

"But pleasant,—so at least Mr. Finn says."

"It is at least very common," said Phineas, not caring to protect himself by a contradiction.

"For myself," said Mr. Palliser gravely, "I think I may say that I always am really anxious to carry into practice all those doctrines of policy which I advocate in theory."

During this conversation Lady Hartleap sat as though no word of it reached her ears. She did not understand Madame Max Goesler, and by no means loved her. Mr. Palliser, when he had made his little speech, turned to the Duke's daughter and asked some question about the conservatories at Longroyston.

"I have called forth a word of wisdom," said Madame Max Goesler, almost in a whisper.

"Yes," said Phineas, "and taught a Cabinet Minister to believe that I am a most unsound politician. You may have ruined my prospects for life, Madame Max Goesler."

"Let me hope not. As far as I can understand the way of things

in your Government, the aspirants to office succeed chiefly by making themselves uncommonly unpleasant to those who are in power. If a man can hit hard enough he is sure to be taken into the elysium of the Treasury bench,—not that he may hit others, but that he may cease to hit those who are there. I don't think men are chosen because they are useful."

"You are very severe upon us all."

"Indeed, as far as I can see, one man is as useful as another. But to put aside joking,—they tell me that you are sure to become a minister."

Phineas felt that he blushed. Could it be that people said of him behind his back that he was a man likely to rise high in political position? "Your informants are very kind," he replied awkwardly, "but I do not know who they are. I shall never get up in the way you describe,—that is, by abusing the men I support."

After that Madame Max Goesler turned round to Mr. Grey, who was sitting on the other side of her, and Phineas was left for a moment in silence. He tried to say a word to Lady Hartletop, but Lady Hartletop only bowed her head gracefully in recognition of the truth of the statement he made. So he applied himself for a while to his dinner.

"What do you think of Miss Effingham?" said Madame Max Goesler, again addressing him suddenly.

"What do I think about her?"

"You know her, I suppose."

"Oh yes, I know her. She is closely connected with the Kennedys, who are friends of mine."

"So I have heard. They tell me that scores of men are raving about her. Are you one of them?"

"Oh yes;—I don't mind being one of sundry scores. There is nothing particular in owning to that."

"But you admire her?"

"Of course I do," said Phineas.

"Ah, I see you are joking. I do amazingly. They say women never do admire women, but I most sincerely do admire Miss Effingham."

"Is she a friend of yours?"

"Oh no;—I must not dare to say so much as that. I was with her last winter for a week at Matching, and of course I meet her about at people's houses. She seems to me to be the most independent girl I ever knew in my life. I do believe that nothing would make her marry a man unless she loved him and honoured him, and I think it is so very seldom that you can say that of a girl."

"I believe so also," said Phineas. Then he paused a moment before he continued to speak. "I cannot say that I know Miss Effingham very intimately, but from what I have seen of her, I should think it very probable that she may not marry at all."

"Very probably," said Madame Max Goesler, who then again turned away to Mr. Grey.

Ten minutes after this, when the moment was just at hand in which the ladies were to retreat, Madame Max Goesler again addressed Phineas, looking very full into his face as she did so. "I wonder whether the time will ever come, Mr. Finn, in which you will give me an account of that day's journey to Blankenberg?"

"To Blankenberg!"

"Yes;—to Blankenberg. I am not asking for it now. But I shall look for it some day." Then Lady Glencora rose from her seat, and Madame Max Goesler went out with the others.

CHAPTER XII.

LORD FAWN.

WHAT had Madame Max Goesler to do with his journey to Blankenberg? thought Phineas, as he sat for a while in silence between Mr. Palliser and Mr. Grey; and why should she, who was a perfect stranger to him, have dared to ask him such a question? But as the conversation round the table, after the ladies had gone, soon drifted into politics and became general, Phineas, for a while, forgot Madame Max Goesler and the Blankenberg journey, and listened to the eager words of Cabinet Ministers, now and again uttering a word of his own, and showing that he, too, was as eager as others. But the session in Mr. Palliser's dining-room was not long, and Phineas soon found himself making his way amidst a throng of coming guests into the rooms above. His object was to meet Violet Effingham, but, failing that, he would not be unwilling to say a few more words to Madame Max Goesler.

He first encountered Lady Laura, to whom he had not spoken as yet, and, finding himself standing close to her for a while, he asked her after his late neighbour. "Do tell me one thing, Lady Laura;—who is Madame Max Goesler, and why have I never met her before?"

"That will be two things, Mr. Finn; but I will answer both questions as well as I can. You have not met her before, because she was in Germany last spring and summer, and in the year before that you were not about so much as you have been since. Still you must have seen her, I think. She is the widow of an Austrian banker, and has lived the greater part of her life at Vienna. She is very rich, and has a small house in Park Lane, where she receives people so exclusively that it has come to be thought an honour to be invited by Madame Max Goesler. Her enemies say that her father was a German Jew, living in England, in the employment of the Viennese bankers,

and they say also that she has been married a second time to an Austrian Count, to whom she allows ever so much a year to stay away from her. But of all this nobody, I fancy, knows anything. What they do know is that Madame Max Goesler spends seven or eight thousand a year, and that she will give no man an opportunity of even asking her to marry him. People used to be shy of her, but she goes almost everywhere now."

"She has not been at Portman Square?"

"Oh no; but then Lady Glencora is so much more advanced than we are! After all, we are but humdrum people, as the world goes now."

Then Phineas began to roam about the rooms, striving to find an opportunity of engrossing five minutes of Miss Effingham's attention. During the time that Lady Laura was giving him the history of Madame Max Goesler his eyes had wandered round, and he had perceived that Violet was standing in the further corner of a large lobby on to which the stairs opened,—so situated, indeed, that she could hardly escape, because of the increasing crowd, but on that very account almost impossible to be reached. He could see, also, that she was talking to Lord Fawn, an unmarried peer of something over thirty years of age, with an unrivalled pair of whiskers, a small estate, and a rising political reputation. Lord Fawn had been talking to Violet through the whole dinner, and Phineas was beginning to think that he should like to make another journey to Blankenberg, with the object of meeting his lordship on the sands. When Lady Laura had done speaking, his eyes were turned through a large open doorway towards the spot on which his idol was standing. "It is of no use, my friend," she said, touching his arm. "I wish I could make you know that it is of no use, because then I think you would be happier." To this Phineas made no answer, but went and roamed about the rooms. Why should it be of no use? Would Violet Effingham marry any man merely because he was a lord?

Some half-hour after this he had succeeded in making his way up to the place in which Violet was still standing, with Lord Fawn beside her. "I have been making such a struggle to get to you," he said.

"And now you are here, you will have to stay, for it is impossible to get out," she answered. "Lord Fawn has made the attempt half-a-dozen times, but has failed grievously."

"I have been quite contented," said Lord Fawn;—"more than contented."

Phineas felt that he ought to give some special reason to Miss Effingham to account for his efforts to reach her, but yet he had nothing special to say. Had Lord Fawn not been there, he would immediately have told her that he was waiting for an answer to the question he had asked her in Saulsby Park, but he could hardly do

this in presence of the noble Under-Secretary of State. She received him with her pleasant genial smile, looking exactly as she had looked when he had parted from her on the morning after their ride. She did not show any sign of anger, or even of indifference, at his approach. But still it was almost necessary that he should account for his search of her. "I have so longed to hear from you how you got on at Lough-linter," he said.

"Yes,—yes ; and I will tell you something of it some day, perhaps. Why do you not come to Lady Baldock's ?"

"I did not even know that Lady Baldock was in town."

"You ought to have known. Of course she is in town. Where did you suppose I was living? Lord Fawn was there yesterday, and can tell you that my aunt is quite blooming."

"Lady Baldock is blooming," said Lord Fawn; "certainly blooming ;—that is, if evergreens may be said to bloom."

"Evergreens do bloom, as well as spring plants, Lord Fawn. You come and see her, Mr. Finn ;—only you must bring a little money with you for the Female Protestant Unmarried Women's Emigration Society. That is my aunt's present hobby, as Lord Fawn knows to his cost."

"I wish I may never spend half-a-sovereign worse."

"But it is a perilous affair for me, as my aunt wants me to go out as a sort of leading Protestant unmarried female emigrant pioneer myself."

"You don't mean that," said Lord Fawn, with much anxiety.

"Of course you'll go," said Phineas. "I should, if I were you."

"I am in doubt," said Violet.

"It is such a grand prospect," said he. "Such an opening in life. So much excitement, you know ; and such a useful career."

"As if there were not plenty of opening here for Miss Effingham," said Lord Fawn, "and plenty of excitement."

"Do you think there is ?" said Violet. "You are much more civil than Mr. Finn, I must say." Then Phineas began to hope that he need not be afraid of Lord Fawn. "What a happy man you were at dinner!" continued Violet, addressing herself to Phineas.

"I thought Lord Fawn was the happy man."

"You had Madame Max Goesler all to yourself for nearly two hours, and I suppose there was not a creature in the room who did not envy you. I don't doubt that ever so much interest was made with Lady Glencora as to taking Madame Max down to dinner. Lord Fawn, I know, intrigued."

"Miss Effingham, really I must—contradict you."

"And Barrington Erle begged for it as a particular favour. The Duke, with a sigh, owned that it was impossible, because of his cumbrous rank ; and Mr. Gresham, when it was offered to him, declared that he was fatigued with the business of the House, and not

up to the occasion. How much did she say to you; and what did she talk about?"

"The ballot chiefly,—that, and manhood suffrage."

"Ah! she said something more than that, I am sure. Madame Max Goesler never lets any man go without entrancing him. If you have anything near your heart, Mr. Finn, Madame Max Goesler touched it, I am sure." Now Phineas had two things near his heart,—political promotion and Violet Effingham,—and Madame Max Goesler had managed to touch them both. She had asked him respecting his journey to Blankenburg, and had touched him very nearly in reference to Miss Effingham. "You know Madame Max Goesler, of course?" said Violet to Lord Fawn.

"Oh yes, I know the lady;—that is, as well as other people do. No one, I take it, knows much of her; and it seems to me that the world is becoming tired of her. A mystery is good for nothing if it remains always a mystery."

"And it is good for nothing at all when it is found out," said Violet.

"And therefore it is that Madame Max Goesler is a bore," said Lord Fawn.

"You did not find her a bore?" said Violet. Then Phineas, choosing to oppose Lord Fawn as well as he could on that matter, as on every other, declared that he had found Madame Max Goesler most delightful. "And beautiful,—is she not?" said Violet.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Lord Fawn.

"I think her very beautiful," said Phineas.

"So do I," said Violet. "And she is a dear ally of mine. We were a week together last winter, and swore an undying friendship. She told me ever so much about Mr. Goesler."

"But she told you nothing of her second husband?" said Lord Fawn.

"Now that you have run into scandal, I shall have done," said Violet.

Half an hour after this, when Phineas was preparing to fight his way out of the house, he was again close to Madame Max Goesler. He had not found a single moment in which to ask Violet for an answer to his old question, and was retiring from the field discomfited, but not dispirited. Lord Fawn, he thought, was not a serious obstacle in his way. Lady Laura had told him that there was no hope for him; but then Lady Laura's mind on that subject was, he thought, prejudiced. Violet Effingham certainly knew what were his wishes, and knowing them, smiled on him and was gracious to him. Would she do so if his pretensions were thoroughly objectionable to her?

"I saw that you were successful this evening," said Madame Max Goesler to him.

"I was not aware of any success."

"I call it great success to be able to make your way where you will through such a crowd as there is here. You seem to me to be so stout a cavalier that I shall ask you to find my servant, and bid him get my carriage. Will you mind?" Phineas, of course, declared that he would be delighted. "He is a German, and not in livery. But if somebody will call out, he will hear. He is very sharp, and much more attentive than your English footmen. An Englishman hardly ever makes a good servant."

"Is that a compliment to us Britons?"

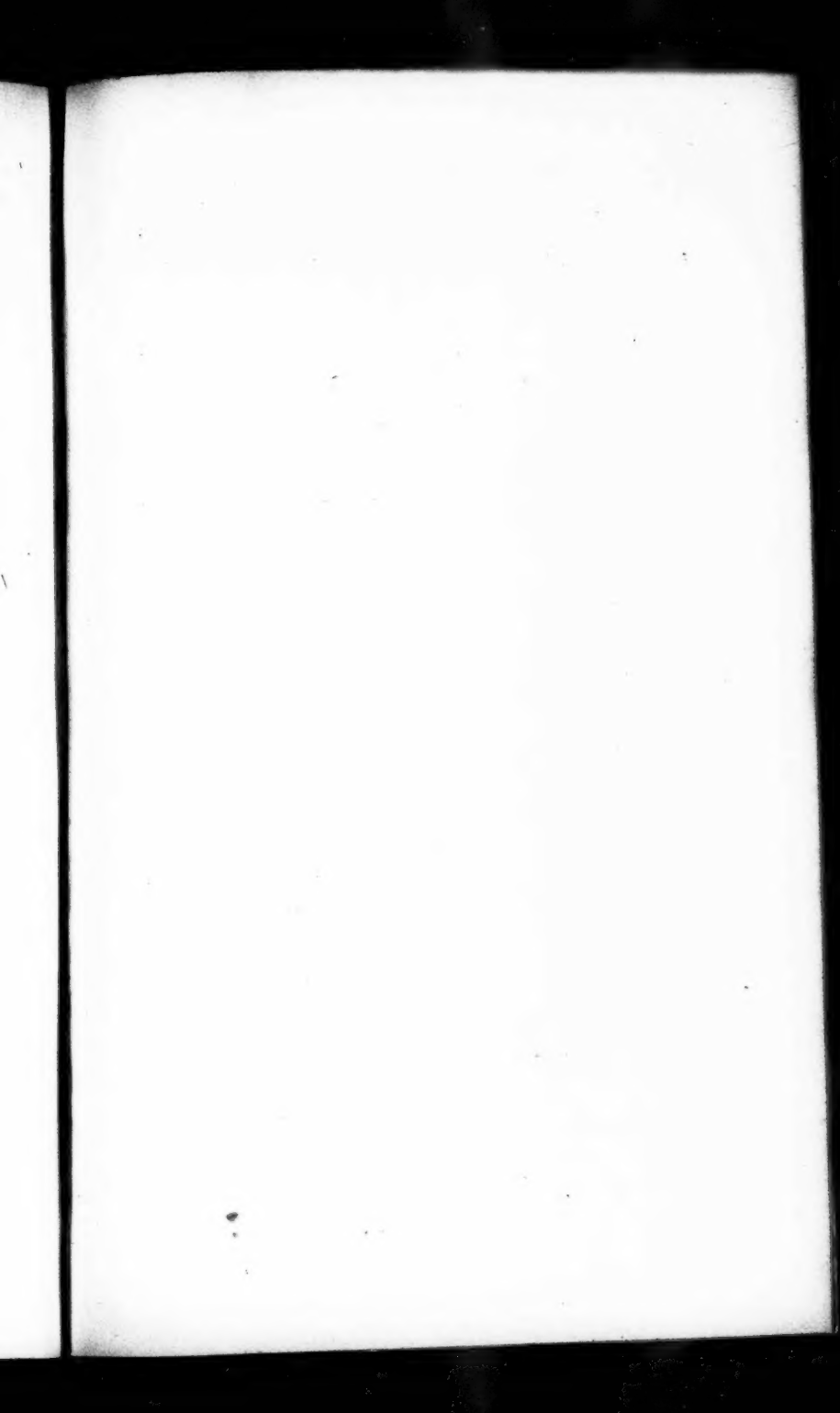
"No, certainly not. If a man is a servant, he should be clever enough to be a good one." Phineas had now given the order for the carriage, and, having returned, was standing with Madame Max Goesler in the cloak-room. "After all, we are surely the most awkward people in the world," she said. "You know Lord Fawn, who was talking to Miss Effingham just now. You should have heard him trying to pay me a compliment before dinner. It was like a donkey walking a minuet, and yet they say he is a clever man and can make speeches." Could it be possible that Madame Max Goesler's ears were so sharp that she had heard the things which Lord Fawn had said of her?

"He is a well-informed man," said Phineas.

"For a lord, you mean," said Madame Max Goesler. "But he is an oaf, is he not? And yet they say he is to marry that girl."

"I do not think he will," said Phineas, stoutly.

"I hope not, with all my heart; and I hope that somebody else may,—unless somebody else should change his mind. Thank you; I am so much obliged to you. Mind you come and call on me,—193, Park Lane. I dare say you know the little cottage." Then he put Madame Max Goesler into her carriage, and walked away to his club.





"It's the system as I hates, and not you, Mr. Finn."